AN
ACCOUNT OF MY LIFE

AN ACCOUNT OF MY LIFE

BY HER HIGHNESS

NAWAB SULTAN JAHAN BEGAM

G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.

RULER OF BHOPAL

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

THE object with which *An Account of my Life* was written is sufficiently explained in the opening pages of the first chapter. Nawáb Sultán Jahán Begam does not claim to have written a book that will interest the general public. But perhaps her own remarkable personality, the unique position which, as a female ruler, she holds in the Muhammadan world, together with the simple and spirited manner in which she tells her story, and the insight it affords into life in one of the most interesting as well as one of the most loyal of the Feudatory States of India, may attract a wider circle of readers than Her Highness's modesty has allowed her to anticipate.

It will, I think, be admitted by the majority of those who have had experience in turning Oriental languages into English that a word-for-word translation not only results in disjointed and unnatural English, but is apt to produce an altogether distorted impression of the author's meaning and literary style. In the following pages I have endeavoured to convey to English readers the

same meaning which, as far as I am able to judge, the Urdu original is intended to convey to Muhammadan readers. The translation is as literal as I could make it, consistently with this aim. In some cases correspondence and speeches originally in English were only available in Urdu translations; I have, therefore, had to retranslate them. All such are marked with an asterisk; and I herewith offer to those who composed them my humble apologies for the liberty I have taken. I wish to thank Munshi Abdul Ghafúr Khán for his patient assistance in the elucidation of many difficult passages.

The portraits are a special feature of the English version. They include not only the leading characters in the history of Bhopál, but the Viceroys of India from the Earl of Mayo to Lord Curzon, as well as many of the Political Officers who played an important part in Central India during the latter half of the last century. For their kindness in placing portraits at my disposal I have to thank Lady Meade, Sir David W. Keith Barr, and Sir Arthur Wollaston, President of the Northbrook Society.

C. H. P.

BHOPÁL, 1910.

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It is the duty of all right-minded men, at the commencement of their undertakings, to give praise and glory to Almighty God, who, in spite of the frailty of human nature, hath raised man to the foremost place amongst created beings, and hath adorned him with sense and understanding to learn, as he passes down the picture-gallery of his life, the lessons of wisdom that are there set before him. And more specially are we, who are Musalmáns, bound to give Him thanks that He hath ordained us to be the followers of His chosen prophet, Muhammad, saying of us, "Of all mankind ye are My faithful servants," and that He hath for our guidance and protection in spiritual and temporal matters set before us His most excellent commandments, and for the sure continuance of the same hath ordained Kings and Princes to rule over us, establishing them in power and majesty by His most holy decree, "To God, His Prophet, and the lawful Kings shall ye render obedience." Yea, verily are His mercies unbounded and infinitely above all human gratitude.

O God unknown, unsearchable, in vain
We strive with human sense Thyself to scan;
Our striving done, unknown Thou dost remain,
Unutterable still Thy praise by man.

Map showing position of
BHOPAL STATE
in
CENTRAL INDIA
Scale of Miles
20 0 20 40 60 80 100
GWALIOR
ALLAHABAD
R. Ganges
R. Jumna
R. Chambal
R. Son
R. Narbada
R. Tapti
Bundi
Kotah
Chitorgarh
daipur
Nimach
Sitamau
Baran
Jhalra Patan
Khilchipur
Narsinghgarh
Ratlam
Nauda
Ujjain
Fatehabad
Dewas
INDORE
Jhabua
Dhar
Mhow
Barwani
Mortakka
Khandwa
Asirgarh
Jhansi
Sipri
Lalitpur
Sironj
Bina Jn
Pathari
Eran
Bhilsa
Sagar
Damoh
Tehri
Chhatarpur
Nowgong
Banda
Ajaigarh
Manikpur Jn
Rewa
Katni Jn
Sauhat
Jabbalpur
Gadarwara
Mohpani
Pachmarhi
Chhindwara
Harda
Makrai
Itarsi
Gondia Jn
BANDELKHAND
CENTRAL INDIA
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London John Murray

AN
ACCOUNT OF MY LIFE

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

After ascribing all honour and glory to God, I commence this work, in which it is my design to complete the history of Bhopál down to the present time. Although I shall concern myself mainly with the course of events in my own State, and the progress of its administration, I shall, I trust, be able to show how the history of Bhopál is connected with, and has been influenced by, the mighty movements that have taken place in the world outside. When those who have witnessed these scenes have passed away, and old records have been lost or destroyed, this book may serve to remind future generations of the debt they owe to those who have gone before them; and when they read of the brave deeds of their ancestors, of their faithfulness to the British Government, and of the eternal renown which is their reward, I trust it may serve to stir up in their hearts a desire to achieve a similar renown by an ever-increasing loyalty to the same Power, and an

ever-increasing appreciation of the blessings which their country has enjoyed under its protection.

To the members of my family I hope that this book will be especially useful, and that they may lay to heart the many lessons it teaches on the conduct of life, whether domestic or public. It may also help them to detect and avoid those persons who, by flattery and servility, seek the favour of those who are above them, and who, having no end in view but their own advancement, care not if they destroy a thousand houses so they may build their own. I am not without hope, also, that the descriptions I have given of royal durbars and other state functions may be of use to my fellow Rulers in India, as well as to political officers and others to whose lot, from time to time, the arrangement of such matters may fall. That my book, dealing, as it does, solely with events connected with my family and my State, will be of interest to the general public, I cannot expect. If it prove of use and interest to my children and my subjects and the generations that are to come after them, the object of my task will be fulfilled.

The history of Bhopál may be divided into two periods, the first commencing with the life and conquests of Nawáb Dost Muhammad Khán, the founder of the Bhopál dynasty, and the second embracing the events subsequent to the treaty with the British Government.

The decay of the Mughal Empire was followed by a period of strife throughout the whole of

NAWAB SULTAN JAHAN BEGAM

At the present time

Hindustán. The doors were shut on order and freedom, and contemporary history is little more than a record of war, massacre, and oppression. In the south and east the English, with science in their train, were step by step advancing their power, but in every other part of the country anarchy and confusion were rife. Although scarcely two centuries have elapsed, obscurity is already drawing her veil over these troublous times, for where war, bloodshed, and civil strife prevail history can shed but a feeble light. In Bhopál itself the pen, by comparison with the sword, was reckoned a thing of very small account. The nobles of the court were men who knew of nothing and cared for nothing but arms and warfare. No soil existed in which science or literature could grow, and the story of the State was left to be told in another generation.

The Bhopál dynasty had not long been established when the Maráthás commenced their predatory campaigns. A few brave Patháns was all that the State could look to to oppose the constantly advancing bands of marauders who threatened to overrun the entire country. Gradually, however, the English, by the fertility of their resources, succeeded in getting this widespread conflagration under control; and peace and security, so long banished by bloodshed and strife, were again restored. The Bhopál State concluded a treaty with the British Government which guaranteed her immunity from all dangers and interference from outside, and with the signing of this treaty the first period of her history terminates.

Although a full and connected narrative of this period was an impossibility, the account which we have of it is not without interest, and we owe a debt of gratitude both to Nawáb Sikandar Begam and to Nawáb Shah Jahán Begam; to the former for having amassed, with careful discrimination and after minute research, the materials for this work, and to the latter for having clothed them in the garb of history.

The second period commences under happier auspices. With the restoration of peace, men's minds turned again to the cultivation of the soil, and the state of chaos which the events of past years had produced in the internal administration of the State gradually began to give place to order and reform. The need for arms and self-defence had passed away, and in its place, ushered in by an era pregnant with new aims and new enterprises, arose another need, little understood before—the need for political foresight and wisdom to guide the destinies of a State in times of peace. Government by means of law and justice is fraught with greater difficulties than government by means of the sword; and in a community where every law was likely to be looked upon as an infringement of personal liberty, these difficulties were increased tenfold. Amongst those to whom the task of overcoming them was entrusted none stands out more conspicuously than Nawáb Sikandar Begam. Endowed with all the sterner attributes of a ruler, she possessed, in addition, that softer quality, the love of peace and mercy, which only attains its full development in

a woman's heart, and by which alone true happiness can be spread. It must be regarded as a proof of God's special favour to the Bhopál State that for three successive generations He has placed the reins of government in female hands.

The story of the first period, with its wars and petty strifes, throws but little light on the actual development of the State; and as it has been treated of at length in the history compiled by my Mother, Nawáb Shah Jahán Begam, there seems no need to go over the ground again. But the reign of Nawáb Sikandar Begam, with which the second period opens, and which was also included in the above-mentioned work, forms an essential and instructive portion of the history of the State. And since this lady was the first, as well as the most capable, of the Begams of Bhopál, a recapitulation of the events of her life and the reforms of her reign cannot be without interest. It, therefore, seems to me fitting that the present work should open with an account of Nawáb Sikandar Begam, though the more detailed description of events must date from my own marriage.

Those who are acquainted with the responsibilities and manifold duties of the ruler of a State will easily understand my difficulty in finding time for the composition of this narrative. Since, however, it is my desire to follow in the footsteps of my ancestors, and to profit by the example which they have set before me, I have determined that the history which Nawáb Sikandar Begam commenced, and which Nawáb

Shah Jahán Begam continued to the year 1872, shall be completed up to the present time by my own hand. In spite of interruptions due to state affairs, and to frequent journeys by land and sea, everything which I have recorded as a fact in this book has undergone the most thorough investigation. After reading the accounts of my journey to Mecca, and my visit to Delhi on the occasion of the durbar in 1903, my readers will be satisfied as to the labour I have bestowed on this part of my task. My late lamented Mother had in her lifetime collected material for a new volume; but, unfortunately, her manuscripts, through the carelessness of those in whose charge they were placed, were destroyed, and the work of repairing this loss has not been the least laborious part of my undertaking.

CHAPTER II

NAWAB SIKANDAR BEGAM

NAWAB SIKANDAR BEGAM holds the same place in the history of Bhopál that the Emperor Akbar holds in the history of India. When Akbar ascended the throne the state of the country was in the highest degree critical. By his political foresight and wisdom, the dangers threatening on every side were met and overcome; and the government was brought to such a high state of efficiency that, although centuries have passed away, the wisdom of his policy and the excellence of his administration continue to be recognized and praised in every civilized country.

Nor did Nawáb Sikandar Begam serve her country less worthily. Born and bred during the darkest days of its history, and surrounded from her cradle by men who, though brave-spirited, were ignorant and illiterate, she spent the first thirty years of her life amid scenes of conflict and the clash of arms, when the only tales that beguiled the time were those that told of battle and bloodshed, and the very atmosphere was hot with war and the rumours of war. There would have been nothing unnatural had the surroundings of her

youth imbued her, too, with the turbulent spirit of the age. But she was by nature peace-loving, and from her earliest days deeds of blood and tales of blood were alike hateful and repulsive to her. The wise acts that subsequently characterized her reign mark her as one specially endowed by nature with the talents and qualities of mind necessary to make a great reformer; and as a great reformer she will go down to posterity in the pages of history. In Bhopal itself the events of her long and happy reign, the vigour and nobility of her mind, and the thoroughness of her work will ever be held in honourable remembrance.

The foundation of the Bhopal State was laid in dangerous times, times when the permanency of the administration necessitated the employment of bodies of armed men whose loyalty could be thoroughly relied upon. For this reason the early rulers gathered round themselves a number of military chiefs and nobles, each of whom supported a band of armed retainers, who in peace time were their personal servants, and in time of war fought under their leadership. The influence of these chiefs dominated every branch of the administration. When Nawáb Sikandar Begam began to rule, the State still contained many such men, and the durbar was a nest of warlike and quarrelsome feudatories, influential and independent, who regarded the new era of peace and order with anything but favourable eyes, and who desired nothing better than to live the same wild and exciting lives their fathers had lived before them. To remedy this state of affairs, and to introduce

NAWAB SIKANDAR BEGAM

NAWAB SIKANDAR BEGAM WITH HER GRAND DAUGHTER SULTAN JAHAN BEGAM

into an assembly of men who, for generations, had obeyed no will but their own, a reverence for law and constituted authority, was a delicate and difficult undertaking. But the Begam had early determined that reform should be the first object of her life. Disregarding the difficulties that lay before her, and relying upon God to strengthen her endeavours, she boldly faced the situation, and, opposing turbulency with firmness, and obstinacy with tact, she succeeded in bringing her refractory courtiers into subjection. Not only did this achievement bring credit and profit to Bhopál, but it raised the Begam, as a ruler, high above many of her contemporaries who could boast of wider and more ancient territories; and it showed to the world that a woman can rise superior to the weaknesses of her sex, and can challenge competition even in those spheres of action which demand qualities that men only are supposed to possess.

The remodelling of the state army was, therefore, the first of the many reforms undertaken by Nawáb Sikandar Begam. The conditions of military service were entirely changed. Out of the gangs of disorderly retainers which were scattered about the State a regular force was constructed, in which every man was the servant of the State, and drew his pay directly from the State treasury. Wise regulations for the management of this force were framed, and military instruction according to the system then employed in the British army was introduced. The artillery, which was ill regulated and badly equipped, was also thoroughly reorganized. The result of these reformatory

measures soon became evident, and what had before been a disorderly and refractory levy was transformed into an efficient and well-disciplined force.

It was due to these wise changes that, during the calamities of the year 1857, when bloodshed, murder, and devastation, consequent upon the mutiny of the native army, filled the greater part of Hindustán, the Bhopál State maintained itself in almost undisturbed tranquillity. The State army had not been so long re-modelled that it could withstand altogether the evil influences which were abroad, and signs of wavering began, at one time, to be apparent in its ranks. But the tact and indomitable resolution of Nawáb Sikandar Begam, and the undaunted courage and fidelity of Nawáb Nazír-ud-daulah Báki Muhammad Khán, Commander-in-Chief of the State forces, not only quenched this smouldering unrest, but kindled in its place a spirit of vigorous loyalty to the British Government, and a keen desire to help in the restoration of peace; and, when mutiny spread to the Sehore contingent, it was subdued and stamped out by the Bhopál force. This force also crossed the *frontiers of the State, and assisted in the maintenance of peace as far as the boundaries of Ságar* and Bandalkand. It gave further proof of its loyalty by affording protection to many English people, who, in those days of blood, knew not where, or to whom, to turn for safety or protection.[1] These services were duly recompensed and

[1] See Appendix A.

appreciated by the British Government, and will long be remembered with pride by the people of Bhopál. I myself can never forget the bravery of my countrymen in those dark days; and I am proud to feel that not only am I the successor of a loyal and faithful ruler, but that my subjects, too, are the children of men who devoted themselves to the service of the British Government.

The difficulties against which Nawáb Sikandar Begam had to contend were, in many cases, the result of the neglect and incompetence of her predecessor, Mián Faujdár Muhammad Khán. On the death of Nawáb Jahángír Muhammad Khán, Nawáb Shah Jahán Begam was appointed his successor; but being too young to be entrusted with ruling powers, Faujdár Muhammad Khán was made regent, and for two years he was free to govern according to his own misguided will. And when Nawáb Sikandar Begam succeeded him as regent, she found herself confronted, not only with the task of restoring order in a chaotic administration, but of paying the interest on a debt of over twenty-three lákhs of rupees, nineteen lákhs of which were the legacy of Jahángír Muhammad Khán, the remaining four lákhs being the two years' contribution of his unworthy successor. At the same time, as the result of mismanagement and neglect, the revenue of the State had dwindled down to little more than eleven lákhs of rupees.

Her military reforms being completed to her satisfaction, the Begam next turned her attention to the economic and social side of the administra-

of his rights, is a first charge on the administration, and the object to which my highest efforts are directed.

When the Mutiny, and with it the rule of the East India Company, came to an end, the services which Nawáb Sikandar Begam had rendered to the British Government were recognized and rewarded. In 1861, a state durbar was held at Jabbalpúr, in which Lord Canning, as the representative of Her Majesty the Queen, in a speech addressed to the Begam, acknowledged her loyalty and friendship during the Mutiny, and placed in her hands the grant in sovereignty of the district of Bairasía.[1] It was formally taken possession of on May 1st, 1861, when Nawáb Sikandar Begam, Nawáb Shah Jahán Begam, Nawáb Umrao Dula, Nawáb Kudsia Begam, Nawáb Sulaiman Jahán Begam, and I myself, with the chief nobles and officers of the State, went to Bairasía to take part in the ceremony. A salute of seven guns was fired from the Fatehgarh fort to announce the transfer. In the following year, at a durbar held at Allahábád, the Begam was invested with the Most Exalted Order of the Star of India.[2] In the same durbar, medals and titles were also conferred upon Mahárája Kyáji Rao Sindhia, the Nawáb Sáhib of Rampúr, and the Mahárája of Patiála.

[1] Bairasia formerly formed part of the state of Dhár, but was afterwards confiscated.

[2] The law enjoins that the *insignia* of the Star of India shall be returned to the Government after the death of the recipient. The Star of Nawáb Sikandar Begam was, therefore, returned after her death; but three years later it was conferred upon her daughter and successor, Nawáb Shah Jahan Begam.

After this durbar, Nawáb Sikandar Begam visited Benáres, Fyzábád, Lucknow, and Delhi.[1] On her return, on November 1st, 1861, she gave a dinner to her European friends to celebrate the honour which had been conferred upon her. The entertainment, the arrangements for which had been in the hands of Dr. Thomson, Agency Surgeon, was a magnificent one; and, notwithstanding the inconvenience of the journey to Bhopál, owing to the absence of railway connection, Major Meade, and a large number of other guests, were present. My *bismillah* ceremony, inaugurating the commencement of my studies, was also performed at this time, and all the guests took part in the festivities connected with it.

In 1860, the Begam attended another durbar at Akbarábád, the famous capital of the Mughal Emperors, at which eighty-four Central Indian Chiefs were present. On entering the durbar hall, she was met by the Viceroy, who, after the usual formalities of welcome, said, "Lord Canning, on his return to London, spoke very highly of you to Her Majesty, who was greatly pleased, and said she would much like to see you." In this

[1] Describing this journey in her book *Tárikh Táj-ul-Ikbál*, Nawáb Sikandar Begam tells how she went to see the grand mosque of Shah Jahán. Its gates were closed, but as a special favour to her, the officers in charge caused them to be opened and allowed her to enter. After describing the mosque, she writes nothing more on the subject. But Captain Hutchinson, formerly Political Agent in Bhopál, in a letter dated April 7, 1862, says that the mosque of Delhi had been closed by the orders of Government on account of the behaviour of the Muhammadans of the city during the Mutiny, and that it was at the request of Nawáb Sikandar Begam that it was once more opened to the public. He also states that on its being reopened the Begam was the first person to enter and perform her prayers.

durbar, she was also presented with a robe of honour, as a mark of appreciation of her wise and loyal government. Lord Lawrence, in the course of an able and instructive speech delivered in Urdu, and dealing with the principles of State administration, spoke as follows in praise of Nawáb Sikandar Begam and the Mahárája Sindhia: "The British Government will honour that Chief most who excels in the good management of his people, who does most to put down crime and improve the condition of his country. There are Chiefs in this durbar who have acquired a reputation in this way; I may mention the Mahárája Sindhia and the Begam of Bhopál."

I have not thought it necessary to describe these durbars at length, a full account of them being contained in my Mother's book. Nawáb Sikandar Begam, seeing her services so thankfully acknowledged and so liberally rewarded, determined to show her gratitude to Almighty God by making a pilgrimage to Mecca.[1] Accordingly, in 1280 A.H. (1864 A.D.), her pious resolution was accomplished, and, notwithstanding the difficulties and dangers of the journey, nearly fifteen hundred persons accompanied her. Thus, not only was she pre-eminent amongst contemporary Chiefs for the wisdom of her rule and the loyalty of her friendship to the British Throne, she also enjoyed the distinction of being the first Muhammadan ruler in India to perform the *haj*. The nobles and

[1] There is no duty more difficult for a Muhammadan lady than the performance of the *haj*; and history shows that, with the exception of Gulbadan Begam, the daughter-in-law of Akbar, no lady of the Timurian dynasty ever accomplished it.

men of rank in Mecca showed her both honour and friendship, and the representatives of the Ottoman Empire received her with the respect and distinction to which her rank entitled her.

Nawáb Sikandar Begam lived for five years after her pilgrimage to Mecca. She departed this life on the evening of Friday, the 13th of the month Rajab, in the year 1285 A.H., and laid at the feet of her Creator the burdens of regency and sovereignty, which for twenty-three years she had faithfully borne.

God alone is immortal.

Nawáb Sikandar Begam, although born to rank and grandeur, loved simplicity, and was so averse from all forms of outward display that she even forbade the erection of a dome over her grave. To high and low alike she extended the same affable courtesy. Although a woman, she possessed all the soldierly qualities that had distinguished her predecessors. Her personality inspired both love and respect. In a word, the enlightened ability of her administration surpasses that of any other ruler whose lot it has been to govern unaided in times as critical. To this day her memory is cherished with honour and affection in the hearts of the people of Bhopál; and the grey-haired amongst them, who remember her days, delight to recount to their grandchildren stories of the fame, the power, the kindness, and the charity of her whom they love to call Sikandar the Good. During the twenty-three years of her reign, Bhopál was transformed into a new State. She saw the

seed, which her own hands had sown, spring up, and become a goodly tree, and God lengthened her days that she might taste the fruit thereof. May her descendants, who dwell beneath its shade, so tend it that its leaves may ever remain green and its fruit become more and more abundant.

I have not space at my disposal to describe all the benefits of this happy reign. They may be summarized as follows: The State army was entirely remodelled; the revenue was increased from eleven to twenty-four lákhs; the debt of twenty-three lákhs left by Jahángir Muhammad Khán and Faujdár Muhammad Khán was paid off, and the mortgaged lands were redeemed; the State was divided up into *nizámats*,[1] and each *nizámat* was connected with the capital city by a metalled road; sanitary and other improvements were made in the city itself; the roads, which were before so narrow that only a *dooly* or a *sowár* could pass along them, were sufficiently widened to admit every kind of vehicle, and were properly illuminated at night; two large schools were opened, one, the Sulaimania School, for the education of the inhabitants generally, and the other, the Victoria School, named after Her Majesty the Queen, for teaching trades and handicrafts; revenue and judicial laws were compiled, and a new and improved police force was organized for the detection of crime; and last, but by no means least, the administration of the *jágírs* was carefully and thoroughly reformed. Indeed, so successful was Nawáb Sikandar Begam in all her

[1] See Appendix D.

administrative undertakings, that Lord Lawrence, as we have already stated, in the presence of eighty-four ruling Chiefs, spoke of her as one whose example was worthy of imitation by all rulers of states. Ever attended by good fortune, her life was, indeed, one to excite men's envy. In return for the burdens of sovereignty she gained, not merely worldly prosperity and fame, but peace and everlasting rest for her spirit. Though she has passed away, her fair name remains. She is not dead, but living still in the hearts of her people, immortalized by her own good deeds.

Her desire for the firmness and permanency of British Rule was honest and sincere, and she lost no opportunity of giving practical proof of her good faith. After her death, Sir Henry Daly, Agent to the Governor-General, in his report to the Government of India, wrote as follows:

> Perhaps in no Native State have the relations with the Government of India been accepted so cordially and firmly as in Bhopál. In the darkest hours of mutiny, with disaffection at her side, nothing turned the Sikandar Begam from her fidelity and allegiance. She possessed rare energy of character and capacity for government, and with all her energy and capacity she was true to British Rule. It was her pride to be known as the faithful Feudatory of the Queen of England; and almost her last breath was in prayer for the happiness of Her Majesty, her family, and Government.

On the news of her death, mourning was proclaimed in the Agency at Sehore, and on the day

of burial all public offices and places of business in the city were closed. Through a letter addressed to Nawáb Shah Jahán Begam by the Duke of Argyll, Secretary of State for India, Her Majesty the Queen communicated her deep sorrow and regret at this "much-lamented event"; and, in offering her condolences to the family, expressed a hope that my Mother would endeavour to emulate the high virtues which had characterized the illustrious Princess whom she was succeeding.[1] Captain Hutchinson, Political Agent, Mr. Hamilton, Colonel Durand, Captain Eden, Colonel Meade, and many other gentlemen, including Sir Lepel Griffin, Agent to the Governor-General for Central India, have all, on many occasions, testified to the noble qualities of Nawab Sikandar Begam, and to this day all communications from the supreme Government are preluded by a reference to her capacity and allegiance.

[1] The letter ran as follows:

INDIA OFFICE, LONDON, *July 31st*, 1869.

To HER HIGHNESS NAWAB SHAH JAHAN BEGAM OF BHOPAL.

MY ESTEEMED FRIEND,

I have received the commands of the Queen to communicate to Your Highness the sincere regret with which Her Majesty has learnt the death of your Mother, Her Highness Nawab Sikandar Begam of Bhopal, and to offer to you her affectionate condolence on this much-lamented event. And I am, at the same time, to express to you Her Majesty's assurance that she feels every confidence that Your Highness will administer the country under your charge with the wisdom and benevolence which characterized the government of the illustrious Princess whom you have succeeded.

That Your Highness may enjoy length of days and continued prosperity is the heartfelt desire of

Your Highness's sincere friend and well-wisher,

(*Signed*) ARGYLL.

Her Highness Nawáb Sikandar Begam came to Bhopál like an angel of mercy. She has gone back to the abode of the angels, but the blessings she brought with her remain, and as long as the State endures they shall not pass away.

No account of the reign of Nawáb Sikandar Begam can be complete which does not make some reference to the chief nobles and Ministers of her court. It is a happy thing for both ruler and ruled when those who hold high offices are men of integrity, diligence, ability, and enlightenment. And it is another instance of the good fortune which invariably attended Nawáb Sikandar Begam that her first and second Ministers, the Commander-in-Chief of her army, and her Private Secretary were all men endowed with the above-mentioned qualities.

Her First Minister was Maulvi Muhammad Jamál-ud-dín Khan Sahib, a man known throughout Hindustán for the piety and simplicity of his life, and who possessed unique qualifications for his important office. Besides being a theologian and a statesman, he possessed military talents of no mean order. History affords few instances of men so richly and so variously endowed. His piety was manifested by his zeal for religious instruction, and by his punctuality in the performance of religious rites. The assistance he gave to the Begam in the affairs of the State, and the impartiality and justice which he brought to bear on his ministerial functions, prove his ability and enlightenment. It is a sufficient proof of his soldierly qualities that at the time when

railways, bicycles, and motor-cars were unknown, he thought nothing of mounting a camel at nine o'clock at night and riding to Indore, a distance of more than a hundred miles. Reaching this place in eight hours, he would transact his business with the Agent to the Governor-General, start on his return journey at three o'clock in the afternoon, and reach Bhopál the same night. For a considerable period of time he was obliged to perform this journey once, and sometimes twice, in a week. He enjoyed the full confidence of the Begam and the political officers, and his loyalty to the State was only equalled by that of his mistress to the British Government. A *jágír* of twenty-eight thousand rupees was conferred upon him. He survived the Begam by fourteen years, and witnessed many of those revolutionary changes by which her death was followed, changes by which he himself was not a little affected. His old age was troubled by the envy and ingratitude of one of his own relatives, Muhammad Sidik Hasan Khan. The treatment which the old Minister met with at the hands of this man would have been esteemed inhuman had it been meted out to an alien and an enemy. Sidik Hasan Khan used every endeavour to undermine his power and influence, hoping thereby to drive him from his office and to become himself the First Minister of the State. Muhammad Jamál-ud-dín often, and with sorrow, confided to me the afflictions of his later days. He showed me much kindness, and taught me both Arabic and Persian, and I acknowledge, with all a pupil's gratitude, the excellence of his methods of instruc-

tion. He departed this life in the year 1299 A.H., without male issue, but leaving behind him daughters to perpetuate his race. The mosques and other buildings which he made are memorials of him that time may obliterate; but his generous and kindly nature made for him other memorials in the hearts of his fellow men which time cannot spoil. Nor will his piety be forgotten; rather will the memory of it be kept ever fresher and more fresh, not by the mosques which he built, but by the prayer of the pious by which five times daily those mosques will be beautified.

The name of the Second Minister was Raja Kishen Rám. He was a member of the Kayasth section of the Hindu community, and a clever *munshi.* He was also an able and sagacious revenue officer, and during his tenure of office he brought the revenue department, of which he was the head, to a high state of efficiency. Like Birbál, in the days of Akbar, he may be counted as one of the jewels of the court.

Háfiz Muhammad Hasan Khán, Nasrat-i-Jang, was the Commander-in-Chief of the State army. He was raised to this office after having gained military experience under his predecessor, Bakshi Murawwat Muhammad Khán. At the time of the Mutiny, when his fellow officers were engaged in protecting the city, he was appointed to command that portion of the State army which was dispatched to help the English in maintaining peace in the neighbouring districts. It is enough to say that, by his distinguished services in behalf of law and order, by his faithfulness to the State,

NAWAB SIKANDAR BEGAM WITH HER FIRST AND
SECOND MINISTERS

and by the conscientiousness which characterized all his acts, he won the regard and honour both of the Begam and of the British Government. He was decorated with a medal, and made a Companion of the Star of India. Of the distinguished servants of Nawáb Sikandar Begam, Bakshi Muhammad Hasan Khán, above referred to, was the only one who survived till my own reign. He was a brave man, and of a generous and honourable disposition. He died in 1321 A.H. The Private Secretary was Munshi Husein Khán. He was my English teacher, and he also filled the post of Private Secretary to my Mother, Nawáb Shah Jahán Begam.

In this connection it is fitting that I should make mention of those political officers whose sympathy and single-mindedness contributed so largely to the success of the rule of Nawáb Sikandar Begam, and won for them not only her gratitude, but that of her successors also. The memory of their friendship and honourable dealings will be an heritage to the people of Bhopál for many generations. When it became manifest that the administration of Faujdár Muhammad Khán was in the highest degree injurious to the State, Captain Eden and Captain Joseph Cunningham supported the claims of Nawáb Sikandar Begam, and, by expelling Faujdár Muhammad Khán from his office, caused her to be appointed regent in his stead. Her subsequent appointment as actual ruler of the State was brought about by Sir Richmond Shakespeare and Captain Hutchinson. These officers themselves placed her on the *masnad*

on the 9th of Shawwál, 1276 A.H., and proclaimed Nawáb Shah Jahán Begam heir-apparent. There can be no doubt that this act was as wise as it was just. From Colonel Meade and Major Durand[1] she received both good advice and sympathy, and in the making of the settlement, and the reforms in the administration of *jágirs*, she owed much to their assistance. It is no mere figure of speech when I say that it is to officers such as these that England owes her fame and her prosperity—men endowed with those qualities of heart and mind which it is the peculiar pride of the English race to possess, and which have gained for it superiority over every other nation in the world. In Bhopal their names will ever be remembered with respect, gratitude, and affection.

[1] Major (afterwards Sir) Henry Marion Durand was acting for Sir Robert Hamilton as Agent to the Governor-General for Central India at the time of the meeting. The following is a list of the Agents to the Governor-General during the reigns of Nawab Sikandar Begam and Nawab Shah Jahan Begam:

Sir Robert Hamilton	1854-1859
Colonel Sir Richmond Shakespeare	1859-1861
Colonel (afterwards General Sir) Richard Meade	1861-1869
Lieut.-General Sir H. Daly	1869-1881
Sir Lepel Griffin	1881-1888
Mr. F. Henvey	1888-1890
Mr. (afterwards Sir) R. Crosthwaite	1890-1894
Colonel (afterwards Sir) David W. K. Barr	1894-1900
Mr. C. S. Bayley, C.S.I.	1900-1905

CHAPTER III

MY CHILDHOOD

THE description of my early life contained in the *Táj-ul-Ikbál* is so brief and void of detail, that it seems to me better that I should myself give some account of my education and general training, and the way in which the days of my childhood were passed.

I was born in the year 1274 A.H. (1858 A.D.), and I cannot help recording this fact with feelings of pride, for it was a year rich in memorable events, and the forerunner of a prosperous and happy era. Before the year 1857, as my readers know, the English, although masters of India, left the administration of its affairs in the hands of a Company, and many parts of the country were still in a disturbed and lawless state. Railways and the telegraph had scarcely been introduced: trunk-roads and district highways were few and ill-maintained: higher education was scarcely thought of, and schools existed only in a few of the large cities. Backwardness was visible on every side: and, if the country was advancing at all, its progress was too slow to be apparent. But it pleased God that this state of affairs should

come to an end. The Mutiny of '57 was not a mere chance event. It may be wiser to draw a veil over its dark tragedies: but let us not forget that it was a touchstone on which, if the loyalty of some turned to dross, that of many others showed bright and clear; and that, if its darkness was black, it was the darkness that came before the dawn.

The year 1858 is a memorable one in the annals of India. It witnessed the restoration of peace, the abolition of the Company, and the assumption by Her Majesty Queen Victoria of the reins of government. It witnessed the arrival of her Majesty's Dispatch, the Magna Carta of India, which, like a sun rising in the West, brought life and vigour to the fainting East, and dispersing the clouds of ignorance, insecurity, and distrust, spread in their stead the light of peace, progress, and knowledge. And it witnessed the beginning of that rule which, though ushered in by the sword, has won, by its beneficence and justice, the willing obedience of a loyal people. The year 1858 was, in fact, the standard-bearer, behind whom marched the armies of civilization and progress, led onward by Western thought and Western enterprise, to do battle against the darkness of this land. If my birth at this time is not a thing on which I have a right to pride myself, I must at least regard it as a high privilege, and one for which I shall never cease to thank Almighty God.

Before my birth even my own country was not free from the troubles of revolt. In the district of Gadhi Ambapáni a rising had taken place, set

on foot by Fázil Muhammad Khán. Nawáb Sikandar Begam was greatly distressed at the prolongation of these disturbances, and was much concerned on account of the hardships which they entailed on her troops; for scarcely had they had time to draw breath after their services during the Mutiny, when this second revolt broke out, and threw the whole district once more into the wildest confusion. This happened about six months before my birth, and, as the Begam was one day meditating upon the difficulties of her surroundings, she made a vow that if, by the grace of God, the revolt could be put down ere these six months were past, the district of Ambapáni should become her grandchild's *jágír*. She prayed that it might happen according to her wish, and her prayer was granted. For it is written in His Holy Word, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in faith, ye shall receive." The insurrection was quelled: and when, on the 27th of the month Zil Kadah, in the year 1274 A.H. (July 10th, 1858), my birth took place, the above-mentioned district became my *jágír*.[1]

Both the Kudsia Begam and Nawáb Sikandar Begam had looked forward to the birth of a son,

[1] *Jágír*. Persian *Ja*, "a place"; *Gir*, "occupying." "A tenure common under the Muhammadan Government, in which the public revenue of a given tract of land was made over to a servant of the State, together with the powers requisite to enable him to collect such revenue, and administer the general government of the district. . . . The assignment was either for a stated term, or, more usually, for the lifetime of the holder, lapsing, on his death, to the State, although not unusually renewed to his heir, and sometimes specified to be a hereditary assignment, without which specification it was held to be a life-tenure only" (Hughe's *Dictionary of Islam*).

for it was a matter of sorrow to them that for fifty-eight years no male child had been born in the family. When, contrary to these hopes, I made my entrance into the world, the Begam showed none of the regret which the birth of a girl might naturally have been expected to cause; and as soon as she saw me, animated by I know not what thoughts and emotions, she clasped me in her arms and said, "Thank God I am not one of those about whom it is written:

> And when any of them is told of the birth of a female, his face becometh black, and he is deeply afflicted.[1]

This child is dearer to me than seven sons." Indeed, had a son been born, she could not have rejoiced more.

The news of my birth was proclaimed by a salute of guns, and entertainments and feasts were provided for all the servants of the State, as well as for the general public both in the city and in the districts, while presents of clothes were distributed among the poor. For six months these rejoicings continued, shared by nobles and commons alike. My birth, coinciding as it did with the advent of the new era, gave a double signification to the occasion, and on every side the air resounded with the music of peace and happiness.

Before I had reached the age of two years, Nawáb Sikandar Begam had been confirmed as the ruler of the State, and the law of succession had been established. At the Jabbalpúr durbar the district

[1] Sale's translation of the Korán.

of Bairasía had been formerly made over to the State, thus increasing both its area and its population: and the Begam had had the honour of receiving a *khilát*, and of being invested with the Most Exalted Order of the Star of India. It is no wonder, then, that she regarded my birth as an auspicious event. Day by day she treated me with more and more kindness. Indeed, her love for me outweighed that of my parents and of all the other members of my family combined. I was the main object of her life, around which all her hopes and pleasures centred. Whenever she went on tour, she used to leave me in the care of my Mother, lest the difficulties of travelling through hilly regions and over rough roads might prove too much for me; but she never failed to arrange that news of my welfare should reach her daily. And although I was so young that I could neither read nor understand what was read to me, yet she continually wrote letters to me full of expressions of love and affection. After my marriage, these letters were given to me by my Mother, and, although I neither remember receiving them nor hearing them read, I never look upon them now without pleasure.

For the first five years of my life I experienced only my Grandmother's fostering care, play being the only matter to which I gave any serious attention. At the close of this period the foundation of my education was laid, with the customary invocation of the divine blessing. A regular course of study was prescribed for me, and my daily routine was as follows:

Before Noon

From 5 o'clock	to	6.	Open-air exercise.
„ 6 „	„	7.	Morning meal.
„ 8 „	„	10.	Reading of the Korán.
„ 10 „	„	11.	Breakfast with Nawáb Sikandar Begam.
„ 11 „	„	12.	Recreation.

After Noon

„ 12 „	„	1.	Handwriting lesson.
„ 1 „	„	3.	English lesson.
„ 3 „	„	4.	Persian lesson.
„ 4 „	„	5.	Arithmetic.
„ 5 „	„	5.30.	Pashtu lessons and fencing practice alternately.
„ 5.30 „	„	6.	Riding lesson.
„ 6 „	„	7.	Evening meal.

And so at 8 o'clock to bed.

The following were my teachers:

Reading the Korán .	Háfiz Syad Muhammad Surati.
Translation and *tafais* of the Korán . .	Maulavi Jamál-ud-dín.
Handwriting . .	Razá Ali Shirin Rakam.
English . . .	Munshi Husein Khán.
Persian . . .	Maulavi Bukhári.
Arithmetic . . .	Guru Jí Pandit Ganpat Rai.
Fencing	Syad Amír Ali.
Riding. . . .	Ustád Hakdad Khán.
Pashtu . . .	Akhúnd Sáhib.

All the arrangements connected with my education, health, and guardianship were in the hands of my Grandmother, and I remained by her side

day and night, three evenings only in each week being spent with my Mother. In 1280 A.H. my Grandmother performed the *haj*. Distressed at the idea of being separated from me, she had desired to take me with her on her pilgrimage, together with my Mother and my Father, Nawáb Umrao Dula. The Nawáb Sáhib was quite willing to go, but my mother was so terrified at the idea of a journey by sea, and made so many stipulations, that the idea of taking her had to be abandoned; and, consequently, the Nawáb Sáhib also was obliged to remain behind. The Begam set out from Bhopal on the 24th of Jamádi-ul-awwal, 1280 A.H. (November 5th, 1863), and the moment when she took her farewell of me is still fresh in my mind. There is no doubt that the parting was a great trial to her, and nothing but her desire to show her gratitude to God, and the knowledge that she was performing a religious duty, would have reconciled her to it. Every post brought letters from her, containing injunctions in regard to my education, besides numerous other instructions for my Mother, which clearly manifest the anxiety she was in on my account. The following are but a few out of the many that I received:

"ADEN, *7th Shábán*, 1280.

"I thank God that to-day, Saturday, the 7th of Shábán, 1280 A.H., at 2 p.m., our good ship *Indore* reached Aden in safety, and all of us are well. Wherever you think of me, make ablutions and perform *namáz* on the prayer-mat which was sewn for you by Zafran, and pray for your grandmother, and ask God to bring her back safe and well from the *haj*."

"ADEN, *8th Shábán*, 1280.

"I have bought for you, on board the ship, a box with a small space to hold an inkpot, and another to keep your letters in; also a small tooth-powder casket, a tea-kettle, a cup, a sweetmeat basket, and a bouquet of real sea flowers that grow in the sea; and I am sending them, together with similar presents for Sulaiman Jahán Begam, with this letter. Give your sister's share to her, and keep your own. The coloured ruler which I am sending is for you only, and not for Sulaiman Jahán Begam."

"MECCA, *17th Shawwál*, 1280.

"I have received your two letters of the 2nd Ramazán, and I heartily thank God to hear that you are quite well. But the letters are not signed by you. I understand that Nawáb Shah Jahán Begam Sáhiba has asked Kanwál Sen to write answers to my letters addressed to you; but he has neglected to make you sign them. In future, whenever you receive a letter from me, you should go to Rája Sáhib Bahádur, and dictate an answer to it with your own lips. Your seal that was with Injir Nána I am now sending you through Haji Husein, the Agent of Háji Ismail, and, God willing, you will soon receive it. I learn from the letter of Munshi Husein Khán, Superintendent of Post Offices, that you still cry whilst reading the Korán, and that you have to be punished. You must remember that you are almost grown up, and that it is, therefore, a great shame for you to cry while you are reading, and to have to be punished. It is quite time that you gave up this bad habit. Whenever you are tired of reading, and you want to do something else, you should tell your teacher so, but do not cry. When you have finished reading you can go to 'Alik-ullah and practise handwriting. Always tell me about Sulaiman Jahán Begam in your letters."

"Mecca, 28th Shawwál, 1280.

"To the fruit of the tree of my heart, the star of my prosperity and good luck, Sultán Jahán Begam. May God enhance her happiness and prolong her life.

"I learn from the letter of Munshi Husein Khán that you very often think of me, and grieve very much over our separation. Now, therefore, I write to tell you that when children are parted from their parents they should pray to God for reunion, and He will grant their prayer, and bring back their parents to them. I told you before I left Bhopál that, God willing, I should return after a year. Now there are 12 months in a year, and 30 days in a month; and if you go to the Rája Sáhib he will help you to find out how many days there are in a year, and then you will know when I am coming back. I should like to know what words you are learning to write now; so send me some of your copy-books. When you dictate your letters to me, say everything that comes into your mind: but, dear child, do not grieve for me at all. God willing, I will return as soon as I have performed my *haj*. Your Injir Nána performs the *tawaf*[1] oftener than any one else. He prays continually for your health, prosperity, and long life. He hopes you will finish the Korán before we return, and that you no longer cry whilst reading it, for it is our Sacred Book, and it is our duty to study it cheerfully."

These letters I read with the most eager joy; but how much greater was my pleasure when

[1] *Tawaf* means making the circuit of the House of the Caaba at Mecca. It is one of the principal ceremonies connected with the pilgrimage, and is often repeated many times. "And let them pay their vows; and compass the ancient house" (Sale's Translation of the Korán, ch. xxii.).

after the expiration of a year, came the news of her approaching return.

On the day of her arrival, my Father, Nawáb Umrao Dula, together with all the nobles and chief officials of the State, assembled at Sikandarábád, three miles outside Bhopál, to bid her welcome; and, to my great joy, I was taken with them. As soon as her cavalcade came in sight, she saw me, though she was yet a long way off, for we were both mounted on elephants. Instinctively she stretched out her arms to me, and I remember how I wished that I had wings that I might fly to her. In a short time our elephants were side-by-side, and the next moment I was in her lap. Until the appointed halting-place was reached she continued to shower blessings and caresses upon me, while tears of joy and thankfulness fell from her eyes. Those, indeed, are pleasant days to recall, the days when I was absolute monarch in childhood's happy kingdom, with trouble, sorrow, and care banished from my dominions.

One of the first things Nawáb Sikandar Begam did after her return was to put me through an examination, to find out what progress my education had made during her absence. Since I had taken care to follow to the letter the injunctions she had given me, I passed this test with credit, and became a greater favourite with her than ever. My studies went regularly on, and whenever the Political Agent, or any other English gentleman, came to Bhopál, the Begam used to ask them to examine me in English, and to write me a certificate as to the result of the

examination. The object of this expedient was two-fold; it was meant to stimulate my own zeal for study, and to enable my Grandmother, who was not acquainted with English, to form a correct idea of the progress I was making. These certificates, of which the following will serve as examples, I have carefully preserved to this day.

BOMBAY CASTLE, *May 8th*, 1866.

To HER HIGHNESS SULTAN JAHAN BEGAM OF BHOPAL.

YOUR HIGHNESS,

I have received your kind letter written in Persian and English, and was gratified to observe the progress you are making in your studies.

Accept my best wishes for your welfare and happiness, in which Lady Frere joins me, and believe me,

Your sincere friend,

(*Signed*) W. E. FRERE.

GWALIOR AGENCY, *New Year's Day*, 1867.

I am greatly pleased to have had an opportunity of hearing the Princess Sultán Jahán repeat her lessons. Her Highness can read English in the First Reader fluently and correctly, has been well and carefully grounded in the first rules of Grammar, and altogether possesses a knowledge of the language which, considering her tender years, gives great promise for the future, and is very creditable to her instructor.

I hope some day to have an opportunity of certifying to still higher attainments on the part of the Princess, who, having so early made such

remarkable progress on the ladder of learning, requires only continued diligence and attention to surmount every step, and thus to qualify herself for the exalted position she will occupy.

(*Signed*) A. W. HUTCHINSON,
Political Agent, Gwálior.

In the year 1284 A.H., my renowned and honoured father Nawáb Umrao Dula died. My love for my Grandmother, combined with my tender age, did much to mitigate my grief, but my Grandmother herself felt the blow very keenly. Indeed, her heart never entirely recovered from this sorrow, and she never ceased to deplore the loss of one who had proved himself a loyal and obedient son-in-law, as well as a kind and loving husband. Who could have believed that, ere the expiration of sixteen months, she herself would have passed away from this world! My age at the time of her death, which, as I have already mentioned, took place in 1285 A.H., was 10 years and 7 months, but I can feel as plainly as if it were yesterday the grief which fell upon me. Her kindly deeds are ever in my mind, her wise counsels come daily to my aid, and I never cease to offer up prayers for the welfare of her soul.

I now commenced to live permanently with my mother, Nawáb Shah Jahán Begam, but my mind was constantly depressed with sad thoughts. My Mother sincerely sympathized with me, and gave me all the consolation in her power. I was now her only child, for her younger daughter, Sulaiman

Jahán Begam,[1] died of small-pox at the age of five, in the year 1277 A.H. In these altered circumstances the arrangements for my education were entirely changed. The handwriting exercises were given up altogether, and my usual hours of study dwindled down to four a day. In my Mother's eyes it was much more important that I should acquire experience in domestic and official duties, than that I should progress in scholarly knowledge. The Korán I had read through before I was eleven years old; but I was now made to study it a second time, and for an hour daily Maulavi Jamál-ud-dín was employed in explaining to me the Holy Book and its commentaries. I read English for two hours a day, and Persian for one hour. These were the only actual lessons I had, but in addition to them I was made to read, and write orders upon various official papers which it was now Her Highness's practice to send me daily. The following *parwanahs*[2] which I received from time to time will give some idea of the system under which I was educated after my Grandmother's death:

(1) It has been brought to my notice that at the present time your studies are not being pursued with regularity, and it is not clear in what manner

[1] Sahibzadi Sulaiman Jahan Begam was born on the 12th of Jamadi-ul-awwal, about three years after my own birth. In spite of her having been vaccinated, she was attacked by small-pox. The physician who treated her, Hakim Ján Sáhib, mistook the nature of the disease from which she was suffering, and administered the wrong medicine, which did her great harm. She died on the 13th of Muharram, 1282 A.H.

[2] The Persian word *parwanah* signifies, literally, a written order. It is a common term for any vernacular letter addressed to a subordinate officer.

you employ your time from morning till evening. These are the hours which you should devote to study. You are, therefore, to draw up a time-table of the work that you are doing. On receiving this, I will myself send you a revised time-table for your daily guidance.

(2) You are to study the Holy Korán, with translation, from 7 a.m. till 9 a.m. with the Madár-ul-muhám Sáhib. You may then take your morning meal and rest. Between 2 and 4 p.m., you are to read the official papers which I shall send to you, and write on them any orders that you consider necessary. After 4 o'clock, your time is at your own disposal. You may go for a walk, or attend to household matters, or employ yourself in any way that you like.

(3) I am pleased to send you two certificates in English: one from Major Hutchinson, Political Agent in Gwalior, and the other from Major Wood. These certificates you should regard as a *sanad*. I hope that you will so persevere with your English studies that you may gain many more such certificates.

(4) I have received your letter in which you say that you would like to send your files of official papers to me, so that I may see the orders that you have passed upon them. I am very glad to grant your request. Let all the papers, along with drafts of your orders, be sent to me. It will be still better if you yourself come to me, so that you may the better understand the corrections that have to be made in them.

(5) You are to sign all urgent papers every day, and those that are not marked urgent twice a week, just as I myself am accustomed to do. I hope that you will strictly observe these instructions, so that the people concerned may not complain of delay.

NAWAB SULTAN JAHAN BEGAM.

Aged five years.

NAWAB SULTAN JAHAN BEGAM.

Aged eleven years.

On the first day of Shábán, in the year 1285 A.H. (November 16th, 1868), Nawáb Shah Jahán Begam ascended the throne, and I, at the same time, was proclaimed heir-apparent and received a *khilát*. At a durbar held on this occasion, at which Colonel Meade, Agent to the Governor-General in Central India, and Colonel Osborne, C.B., Political Agent in Bhopál, were present, I made the first speech of my life. It was as follows:

"I thank God who of His great goodness has advanced me to this dignity, and I thank the Agent to the Governor-General for Central India, and the Political Agent in Bhopál, who have appointed me heir-apparent, and my Mother ruler of Bhopál: I pray that the merciful God will keep me loyal to the British Government during the whole of my life."

All those who were present were delighted with my speech, and marvelled that one so young could speak with such clearness and confidence.

When a Muhammadan child has completed the reading of the Holy Korán it is customary to mark the occasion with great rejoicings, and for this purpose the ceremony of *nashrah* takes place. In the case of both my Mother and my Grandmother the *nashrah* had been performed with great splendour. So in 1288 A.H., my Mother decided that my own *nashrah* should be celebrated; and since this was the first occasion on which she had ever arranged a ceremony for me, it was performed on a grand and liberal scale. Invitations were sent to the European officers at the Residency and the Agency, and to the neigh-

bouring Chiefs, and entertainments were also provided for the servants of the State and the citizens of Bhopál. Every night the streets were illuminated, and brilliant displays of fireworks took place. Festivities of various kinds were continued throughout a whole month, the entire cost amounting to Rs. 2,96,419. 9. 6.

In the same year Nawáb Shah Jahán Begam married her second husband Sidik Hasan Khán, an event which marked the commencement of one of the unhappiest periods of my life. Intrigue became rife in the palace, and every kind of attempt was made to undermine my Mother's affection for me, which in truth began to lessen day by day. The story of these days is best left untold, and I shall now pass on to the only event of interest which took place during the time that I remained in my Mother's charge, namely, my marriage, an account of which will form a fitting conclusion to the history of my early life.

CHAPTER IV

NAWAB BAKI MUHAMMAD KHAN

It is necessary that I should, at this point, give a brief account of my Father and his family that my readers may be able to understand the reasons which led Nawab Sikandar Begam to select as the husband of her daughter a stranger from the Mishti Khail. This Khail, or clan, like that of my Mother, the Mirazi Khail, was amongst the most famous in the Tirah country. The Afridi, Aurakzai, and Mishti Khail usually lived in the same region, and enjoyed a reputation similar to many other brave and warlike tribes. The founder of the Indian branch of this family was my Great-grandfather, Ali Bayázid Khán. He migrated from Afghánistán, and, as the Mirázi Khail were his friends and countrymen, he settled in Bhopál.

His advent was a great joy to every one, and particularly to Nawáb Wazir Muhammad Khán: for the times were stormy, and the arrival of Bayázid Khán was nothing less than a god-send to him. He was at once given a post in the army, as were also his two sons Bahádur Muhammad Khán and Bagh Muhammad Khán, who, though young in years, had the bearing of brave

and high-spirited youths. Ali Bayázid Khán performed his military duties in a manner befitting a man of birth and courage, and day by day, until his death, the Nawáb's respect and affection for him increased. His death was soon followed by that of his son Bagh Muhammad Khán. Bahádur Muhammad Khán, the elder, proved to be a true son of his father, and continually gave proof of his loyalty and courage, while the Nawáb reposed such confidence in him that he selected him to be companion to his own son Nazír Muhammad Khán. A short time afterwards, when Bhopál was besieged by Jagva Bapu,[1] he entrusted the defence of the gateway of the Old Fort to these two young men, whilst he himself looked to the defence of the other entrances. At this time the Nawáb had very few men at his disposal, and it had become necessary that every side of the fort and city should be defended. At each gateway, therefore, was posted a body of from fifty to sixty men under the command of two Sirdars. The Old Fort gateway, however, inasmuch as it was on the edge of a lake, was considered to be less vulnerable than the others, and a smaller force was set apart for its defence. This fact became known to the besiegers, who attacked the gateway in such large numbers that they forced an entrance into the city. Nazír Muhammad Khán and Bahádur Muhammad Khán displayed all the courage and warlike qualities

[1] Jagva Bapu was the general who commanded the forces of Sindhia. For an account of the siege of Bhopál by the combined forces of Gwalior and Indore the reader is referred to *The History of Bhopál*, by Nawáb Shah Jahán Begam.

characteristic of their race. Bahádur Muhammad Khán was wounded in many places, but with great bravery continued to maintain his ground; and, with only a handful of men to oppose the overwhelming odds against him, kept the fight going with such vigour that his enemies were filled with confusion. Intelligence of what was taking place in this quarter reached Nawáb Wazír Muhammad Khán, and his arrival in the nick of time with reinforcements turned their confusion into a complete defeat.

At the conclusion of this war Bahádur Muhammad Khán, in reward for the conspicuous services he had rendered, was raised by the Nawáb to the position of Commander-in-Chief of the forces of Bhopál. Day by day Bahádur Muhammad Khán added to the dignity of his office, and enjoyed till his last hour the reputation of a brave and skilful commander. The following instance of his loyalty and gratitude is worthy to be inscribed in letters of gold. When Jahángír Muhammad Khán took up the reins of government, a dispute arose between him and Nawáb Sikandar Begam, and to such lengths did the Nawáb carry his resentment, that he actually inflicted a sword wound on the Begam's person. With a view to putting an end to this unhappy feud, it was arranged that a *jágír* of five lákhs of rupees should be granted to Nawáb Kudsia Begam, and that she, together with her daughter, Sikandar Begam, should take up her abode at Islámnagar. Accordingly, when they were about to set out for this place, they inquired of Bahádur Muhammad Khán whether he would

prefer to retain the office and rank of Commander-in-Chief of the Bhopál army, or whether he would abandon his high position and retire with them to Islámnagar and obscurity. Bahádur Muhammad Khán's reply, given with cheerful sincerity, was as follows: "That I have obtained rank and honours is due to the favour and goodness of Nawáb Wazír Muhammad Khán and Nawáb Ghaus Muhammad Khán. Neither I nor my children will ever stoop to such ingratitude as to desert the daughters of our benefactors in their hour of need. I count a cake of barley-bread at their hands in Islámnagar better than a thousand luxuries in this city, and a humble place in their service more honourable than to hold the command of the army of the State." The spirit of gratitude which animated the father manifested itself in no less a degree in the person of his two sons, Sadar Muhammad Khán and Báki Muhammad Khán (afterwards Nawáb Umrao Dula), who likewise prized the friendship of the two Begams beyond all other honours. For seven years, therefore, Nawáb Kudsia Begam and Nawáb Sikandar Begam lived in retirement at Islámnagar; and when, at the close of this period, the latter assumed the regency, Bahádur Muhammad Khán was again restored to his office. On his death he was succeeded by his elder son, Sadar Muhammad Khán, and when he died without issue his younger brother, that is to say my own revered Father, became Commander-in-Chief of the forces of the State.

My Father was esteemed as well for his hand-

some appearance as for his noble disposition. Indeed, his bravery and comeliness have passed into a proverb. Even in his childhood the charm of his person and the grace of his manner captivated all who came in contact with him, and he possessed all the qualities necessary to make a fine general. From the first, Nawáb Sikandar Begam was deeply attached to him; and indeed he was worthy of her affection both on account of his own services and those of his family. The Begam was a shrewd and keen observer of human nature, and, judging Báki Muhammad Khán to be a proper man for her son-in-law, she deemed that his marriage with her daughter, Shah Jahán Begam, and the consequent union of the two clans, would form a fitting recognition of the many services his family had rendered. Accordingly, with the knowledge and approval of the Government of India, this marriage was celebrated on the 11th day of the month Zikád, in the year 1271 A.H. (July 29th, 1855). The Government of India presented the Nawáb with a *khilat*,[1] and awarded him, at the Begam's request, a salute of seventeen guns. Orders were also issued for his suitable reception at public ceremonies, and the title Umrao Dula Nazír-ud-daulah was conferred upon him.[2]

No son could have been more devoted to his mother than was the Nawáb to Sikandar Begam.

[1] A *khilat* is a "dress of honour presented by a Ruler to an inferior, as a mark of distinction. A complete *khilat* may include arms, or a horse, or an elephant" (Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*).

[2] It was on the strength of this precedent that a salute and similar honours were conferred upon Sidik Hasan Khán at the time of his marriage.

This devotion sprang as much from a sense of duty as from the natural warm-heartedness of his race. The Begam in her turn bestowed upon him all a mother's affection. At the time of the Mutiny, Nawáb Umrao Dula had, in consequence of his royal marriage, relinquished his position as Commander of the forces of the State, and the appointment had been conferred on Bakshi Murawwat Muhammad Khán, his sister's son-in-law. But since the Begam was aware of his intimate knowledge of military affairs, and of his influence over the troops, she used, even in times of peace, to take him into her counsel in all matters connected with the army; in fact, she looked upon him as her Minister of War. The outbreak of the rebellion filled him with anxiety and alarm, which were intensified by the dangers and perplexities of the Begam's position. He did all that lay in his power to keep the State free from disturbance, and to carry out the Begam's desire to help the English, and to prevent the roads leading to the city from being blocked. To add to his difficulties, news was brought that Fázil Muhammad Khán and Adil Muhammad Khán, two Jágírdárs of Ambapáni, had joined the insurrection; and, at the same time, signs of unrest were becoming apparent amongst the troops in the city and the Fort. Under the instructions of the Begam, Nawáb Umrao Dula took immediate steps to cope with these difficulties, and worked day and night devising and directing plans of operation. Every day reports from the *mufassal* came pouring in upon him, each requiring his immediate

CAPTAIN MATTU KHAN, AFTERWARDS NAIB BAKSHI

HAFIZ MUHAMMAD KHAN NAIB BAKSHI

BAKSHI MURAWWAT MUHAMMAD KHAN

instructions, while the officers entrusted with the task of maintaining tranquillity in the outlying districts were all looking to him for orders and guidance. His untiring energy at this juncture, and his skilful conduct of affairs, were admirably set forth in the records of the State; but, unfortunately, every paper bearing on the subject was destroyed by certain malicious persons who were envious of his fair name. Copies, however, of many of his orders are still to be found in the families of the officers to whom they were originally dispatched, being treasured as honourable relics and proofs of faithful service; and from these some idea of his presence of mind and promptness in times of emergency may be gained. I quote three of them:

Copy of an order of Nawáb Nazír-ud-daulah Umrao Dula, Báki Muhammad Khán, addressed to Muhammad Shams-ud-din Ansári:

"*1st Muharram*, 1275 A.H.

"The communication of Háfiz Muhammad Khán, Naib Bakshi, dated 21st Zil Hijjah, has informed me that last night you, together with the said Naib Bakshi, came into collision with Adil Muhammad Khán and his followers, and, with great courage and military skill, inflicted on them a severe defeat, not only killing a large number, but capturing their provisions, arms, and beasts of burden. This signal proof of your loyalty and courage has given me the greatest satisfaction, and you have won the high regard both of Her Highness the Begam and of myself. Let it be your study to live up to the reputation you have gained, and to continue to deserve our high praise. Keep this order as a

mark of my favour, and as a testimony to the good name you have won."

Copy of the orders of Nawáb Nazír-ud-daulah Umrao Dula, Báki Muhammad Khán Bahádur, dated 7th Muharram, 1275 A.H.:

"A copy of this petition, together with the orders passed thereon (dated 6th Muharram, 1275 A.H.), is to be forwarded to Nawáb Sikandar Begam for information; the original is to be sent to Lálá Naubat Rai to be filed. A copy of these orders is also to be sent to Munshi Shams-ud-dín, who, with two patrols, should proceed to Ghairat-ganj, and with the help of the servants of the *mahal* and the *thána*, and in consultation with the Kámdár and his deputy, should endeavour to restore order in the town, and take steps to punish the rebels. He should keep Her Highness informed of all that takes place, and of any particulars which he can give concerning the whereabouts of the rebels, and of Adil Muhammad Khán. A second copy is to be sent to Gadhuri Lal, with instructions to furnish two patrols from the company of Jamadárs. Razá Husein is to accompany Munshi Shams-ud-dín to Ghairat-ganj. A third copy is to be sent to the petitioner Lálá Durga Parshád, Thánadár, with the information that Munshi Shams-ud-dín has been sent to his help with two patrols, and instructing him, with the aid of these men, and the servants of the *mahal* and the *thána*, to take the necessary steps for the restoration of good order in the town, for safe-guarding the property of the inhabitants, and for protecting the chief buildings, roads, and ghâts, and restoring confidence amongst the people of the town and the surrounding villages, so that the insurgents may not dare to show themselves again in

that neighbourhood. The recipients of these orders must be day and night on the alert, and must show neither fear nor hesitation in the performance of the duty that has been entrusted to them, and must before all things put their trust in the Great Helper of mankind."

A copy of the orders of Nawáb Nazír-ud-daulah Umrao Dula, Báki Muhammad Khán Sáhib Bahádur, dated 19th Rabbi-ul-awwal, 1275 A.H., and endorsed on the application of Munshi Shams-ud-dín Ansári :

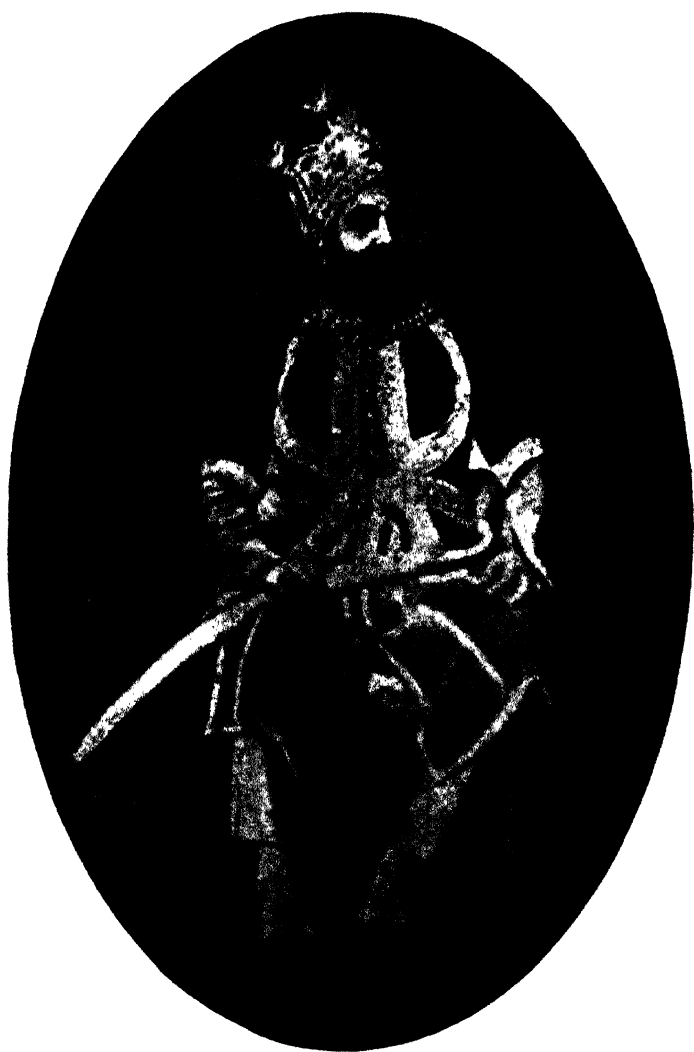
"A copy of this petition is to be forwarded with my endorsement to Nawáb Sikandar Begam Sáhiba. A copy is also to be sent to Munshi Shams-ud-dín, who is to be informed that his letter from Raisen, dated 9th Rabbi-ul-awwal, regarding the insurgents, reached me this day some three hours before sunset. It is essential that he should inform Her Highness of any facts regarding the insurgents that may have come to his knowledge. He must, by any means that may be possible, reach Ghairat-ganj, and, having arrived there, he must take every precaution necessary for the protection of the town, and do his utmost to restore order and tranquillity amongst the inhabitants."

My Father dealt with the mutinous spirit of the troops in a very masterly fashion. Boldly, and without any sign of excitement or anxiety, he conducted Nawab Sikandar Begam to the lines, and requested her to address the soldiers. She at once complied, and, briefly, but with great earnestness, exhorted them to be loyal to herself and to their duty. Her speech was followed up by a

soldierly and eloquent oration from the Nawáb himself. Their words took effect with the speed of lightning. In a few moments every trace of insubordination had vanished, and the army, which had previously exhibited all the symptoms of mutiny, was brought to submission and obedience. But the Nawáb did not stop here. He called to mind, and acted upon, the well-known saying of the world-famed philosopher Sádi, "Give a soldier gold, he will give you his head"; and by a judicious and liberal distribution of *bakhsheesh*, the permanency of the newly restored allegiance was assured.

As I said above, my Father fully merited Nawáb Sikandar Begam's confidence and affection. Indeed, he bore away from her all the sorrow which the lack of a son usually creates in the female heart. She never attended a durbar without him, and her daily thought was how to increase his honour and dignity.

In the year 1283 A.H., the Nawáb was attacked by a severe form of dyspepsia, and for this reason he undertook a pilgrimage to Mecca, where he remained for a year under the care of Hakím Mulla Nawáb. He then went to Egypt to try the effect of the climate of that country; but, for lack of regular treatment, no benefit resulted, and his condition grew daily worse. He returned to Bhopál after seven months in a state of extreme weakness, and died on the 21st of the month Safar, in the year 1284 A.H. He was buried in his own garden.

My Father was married in all three times. His

NAWAB UMRAO DULA

first wife was Malika Bíbí, the niece of Ghaus Muhammad Khán. She bore him a daughter, and died a year after her marriage. His second wife belonged to the Firoz Khail. She bore him four children, and is still living. Since the marriage with Shah Jahán Begam was contracted during the lifetime of this lady, a *jágír* of Rs. 6,000 was granted for her maintenance, and she is in possession of it to the present day.

CHAPTER V

MY MARRIAGE

FROM what has been said in previous chapters, my readers will have seen that Nawáb Sikandar Begam treated me with rare kindness, and that my welfare, both present and future, was constantly before her mind. I have told how, notwithstanding the cares and responsibilities of her high office, she took upon herself the entire charge of my training and education; and how, in her leisure hours, it was her habit to call me to her side and supplement my general studies with kindly advice and wise instruction (from which, more than from any part of my education, I still continue, both in my public and private life, to derive light and guidance).

But in addition to my general upbringing, there was another matter about which Nawáb Sikandar Begam was equally solicitous, and that was my marriage.* Her anxiety on this account was intensified by the consideration of my position as heir-apparent to the throne of Bhopál, as well as by the recollection of certain unfortunate complications which had arisen in connection with the arrangement of former marriages in the family.

Although, therefore, I was still very young, having barely reached my seventh year, she was determined to select a husband for me before she died, and to choose a youth of tender age, that she herself might watch over his training, and teach him to sympathize with and understand the ways of the people amongst whom his life would be passed. This plan, she believed, would not only afford me ample opportunities of studying his character and temperament, but would also render him fitter to be my helpmate and counsellor in the life that lay before me.

In making her choice, it was necessary to look outside the territories of Bhopál.[1] Her own husband had belonged to the Mirazi Khail, and she was, therefore, intimately acquainted with all the families of that clan who resided in the State, and from none of them did she consider that a suitable selection could be made. Recollection of the difficulties experienced in connection with the

[1] Similar considerations had prevailed in connection with the marriage of my Mother, and many difficulties of a political nature had arisen. These difficulties were not overcome without considerable trouble, but they were not unproductive of good; for it was in consequence of them that the British Government issued a decree to the effect that husbands of the Begams of Bhopál, though styled Nawabs, should have no right to interfere in the administration of the State. The letter of the Government settling this matter was dated November 7th, 1854, and immediately after its receipt the search for a husband had begun. Boys from many of the most notable families in India were summoned to Bhopal, and choice was eventually made of Kudrat Ullah Khán, who was the uncle of Nawab Ihtisham-ul-mulk. This family had its home in Jalálabad, and was connected by blood with the Bhopál family, each being descended, though in a remote period, from common ancestors. For various reasons, however, this marriage was never celebrated, and my mother, as the reader knows, took as her husband Bakshi Báki Muhammad Khan, Nasrat-i-jang.

marriage of her daughter also added to Nawáb Sikandar Begam's anxiety on my account, and she determined to do all in her power to settle matters in such a manner that no subsequent troubles or impediment could arise. She entered into correspondence on the subject with the Political Agent, and the Agent to the Governor-General, in the course of which she intimated that there were four families in Bhopál from any of which it would be in the highest degree impolitic and dangerous to select my husband. These were the families of Faujdár Muhammad Khán (*i.e.* the family of Ghaus Muhammad Khán), Jamál Muhammad Khán, Muazzam Muhammad Khán, and Fázil Muhammad Khán; and, in the event of her dying before my marriage, she urged the Government to bear her wishes in mind, since all the four families above mentioned were enemies to the State, and particularly the last-named, that of Fázil Muhammad Khán, who, in the days of the Mutiny, had fought against the Government, and was captured and handed over to the English by the Bhopál army. A full account of this affair was sent to the Agent to the Governor-General by the First Minister, in his letter dated 24th Rabbi-ul-awwal, 1290 A.H., and formed a part of the correspondence above referred to. At this juncture, Nawáb Sikandar Begam set out for Mecca, and it was only on her return from this pilgrimage that she was able to take active steps towards the accomplishment of her desire.

It may not be out of place if I state very briefly the chief considerations which a marriage in a

Muhammadan family of rank gives rise to; for we change rapidly in these days of higher education and social reform, and should our grandchildren be anxious to know how such matters were settled in the middle of the nineteenth century, they will probably find the pages of history their only source of information. In most Indian families it is still customary for parents to arrange the marriages of their children. And it is right that they should do so. For happiness in later life depends upon the existence of sympathy and love between husband and wife; and since none can understand the nature and temperament of a child or forecast its future more clearly than its own parents, it follows that they alone are competent to decide a matter on which the welfare of their children so largely depends. In well-to-do families of the upper classes it is considered more important that the husband should be of good birth than that he should possess wealth and learning, since the former is a surer guarantee of nobility than the latter, and offers a truer support amidst the difficulties of life; and it may often be observed that the traditions which accompany noble birth will save a man from the evils into which illiteracy and poverty might otherwise plunge him. For this reason the pedigree of a would-be son-in-law is always investigated with the greatest care; and although this task is often beset with many difficulties, its performance is not only expedient, but is strictly enjoined by the laws of Islám.

Next to gentle birth, the most desirable quality in a son-in-law is thrift; and on this point, too, the

doctrines of Islám lay considerable stress; extravagance being stigmatized as a crime of sufficient blackness to justify a wife in leaving her husband. And there can be no doubt that prodigality on the part of a husband destroys the peace of mind of the wife, brings desolation on the household, and saps the joys of married life. But if extravagance is a crime in a private individual, how much more is it so when displayed by the consort of a ruler, who, besides being responsible for the well-being of her own household, has also the control of public revenues, and is therefore indirectly, if not directly, responsible for the happiness and well-being of every family in her territories?

In selecting my husband, therefore, noble birth and a frugal disposition were the two first considerations which Nawáb Sikandar Begam kept in view, though a handsome appearance and the habits and manners of a gentleman were in her eyes by no means unessential. If these qualities could be found combined in one not too old to undergo training and education, then other considerations, such as wealth or learning, would be of very minor importance. In these circumstances her thoughts turned towards Jalálábád, a place with which she was intimately acquainted; and she entered into communication with Háji Ahmad Karím, who lived in that neighbourhood, and who was the son-in-law of her First Minister, Maulavi Jamál-ud-dín. On his recommendation she wrote on the 13th of the month Zikád, 1281 A.H., to one Ata Muhammad Khán, a respected resident of Jalálábád, and requested him to give her information

about the families of the Fatima Khail (a branch of the Mirázi Khail), who dwelt either at Islámnagar or Jalálábád. After the necessary inquiries had been made, it was decided that a few of the most eligible boys should be selected and presented to Her Highness at Agra, for it was her intention to be present at the durbar shortly to be held in that city. And should one of the candidates meet with her approval, he was to be removed to Bhopál, where arrangements for his training would be made, and, after the lapse of sufficient time to enable a just estimate of his habits and temperament to be formed, a final decision in regard to him would be given. Accordingly, in the month Jamádi-us-sáni, 1283 A.H., Ata Muhammad Khán brought several boys to Agra and presented them to the Begam. Her Highness's choice fell upon Ahmad Ali Khán, the son of Báki Muhammad Khán,[1] who, in birth, manners, and appearance excelled all other suitors. Ahmad Ali Khán was accordingly brought to Bhopál, and his training under the supervision of the Begam was commenced, an allowance from the fund for state pensions being made to his mother Muhammadi Begam.

Nawáb Sikandar Begam was not destined to see the realization of her plans for my future happiness. A year after the visit to Agra she fell ill, and Muhammadi Begam, seeing that her condition was critical, said to her: "You are ill; let me

[1] Báki Muhammad Kkán was the son of Imám Ali Khán, who was the son of Diláwar Khán, who was the son of Muhammad Yár Khán, who was the son of Sálar Mír Muhammad Khán, and hence a representative of one of the noblest and most ancient families of Jalálábád.

take the boy to my home, and when God grants you recovery I will bring him back to you." But Nawáb Sikandar Begam decided that he should be left to the care of Nawáb Shah Jahán Begam, with whom suitable arrangements had already been made. These instructions were complied with, and on the death of Nawáb Sikandar Begam, Muhammadi Begam returned to her own country in order to look after the *jágír* which the Government had granted to her, as well as to make arrangements for the marriage of her daughter.

The system devised for the upbringing of Ahmad Ali Khán by Nawáb Sikandar Begam was followed for the next four years—that is, to within a year of the time of my marriage. During this period we were constantly together both in study and play. We took our meals together, and only our sleeping-rooms were separate. Indeed, the only time we spent apart from each other's society was the half-hour after our lessons, which Ahmad Ali Khán used to pass with his mother Muhammadi Begam, and after the departure of the latter to her home even these short partings ceased.

Since no ceremony had as yet confirmed my betrothal to Ahmad Ali Khán, it is not surprising that, after the death of my Grandmother, many letters containing proposals for my hand were received from various parts of the country; and at last my Mother decided to take the advice of her nobles and councillors, and she called a meeting at which the following persons were present: Mír Bakshi Háfiz Muhammad Hasan Khán; Mír Hátim Muhammad Khán, brother of the Kudsia

Begam; Mattu Khán, who was Second-in-Command of the state army; Munshi Husein Khán; Bakshi Kudrat Ali Khán, Second Minister, and the First Minister. At this meeting, it was unanimously decided that no person was more suited to be the husband of the Nawáb Sultán Jahán Begam than Ahmad Ali Khán. No pressure was brought to bear on any of the voters, and their consensus of opinion was the natural outcome of a general admiration for the good qualities of Ahmad Ali Khán. Had it been otherwise, many of these nobles would have tried by any means and at any cost to secure for their own families so coveted an alliance. Nawáb Shah Jahán Begam, who loved Ahmad Ali Khán like a son, heartily desired the match. And Sidik Hasan Khán, of whom mention has already been made, also gave his approval. That he ever did anything so conducive to my happiness is a miracle, and only shows how, by the help of God, even our enemies may become instruments for our good.

This matter being satisfactorily settled, Nawáb Shah Jahán Begam, in conformity with the custom of the times, sent a letter to Nawáb Kudsia Begam, informing her that Ahmad Ali Khán had, with her own approval and that of the nobles of her court, been chosen to be the husband of her daughter, Nawáb Sultán Jahán Begam. In reply, the Kudsia Begam sent her congratulations, but from the way her letter was worded it was plain that she resented the fact that she had not been consulted. The correspondence concerning my

marriage has no direct bearing on the events to be recorded, but I have decided to insert it that my readers may be able to form an idea of the manner in which such correspondence was conducted thirty or forty years ago—a manner which is rarely to be seen in these days, and which, before many more years of this strenuous age have passed, will probably be altogether obsolete.

Letter from the Kudsia Begam to Nawáb Shah Jahán Begam, dated 8th Rajab, 1279 A.H.:

"To my beloved Shah Jahán Begam, fountain of prosperity and excellence, light of the lamp of glory and goodness, to whom God grant long life, prosperity, and honour. Be it known to you that your letter of the 6th day of Rajab, 1289 A.H., informing me of the proposal for the marriage of Sultán Jahán Begam with Ahmad Ali Khán of Jalálábád, and of your and her approval thereof, and that of the nobles and Jágírdárs of your State, has come to my hand. Since your letter is merely one of information, I have nothing to do but to acknowledge its receipt. May any proposal which is for the good of yourself and Sultán Jahán Begam receive the blessing of God Almighty."

On the 17th Shábán, 1289 A.H. (October 21st, 1872) the following letter was dispatched to Colonel John William Willoughby Osborne, C.B., Political Agent in Bhopál:

"Concerning the betrothal of my beloved daughter Sultán Jahán Begam, may her life be long and her prosperity unbounded:—This is to inform you that, with her own and my consent, together with the approval of the nobles, Jágírdárs, and learned men of this State, a husband has

been chosen in the person of Ahmad Ali Khán, the son of the late Báki Muhammad Khán, belonging to a family of the Mirázi Khail, resident in Jalálábád. And I send herewith a copy of a letter, dated October 21st, 1872, corresponding to 17th Shábán, 1289, A.H., addressed to His Excellency the Viceroy of the Indian Empire, with a view to obtaining his consent to, and approval of, the said union; also I send a copy of the marriage proposal, attested by the seal and signature of my beloved daughter, of myself, and of the nobles and distinguished personages above referred to, the original of which document you yourself saw on the occasion of your recent visit to Bhopál; and also a copy of the letter of Nawáb Gauhar Sáhiba Kudsia, which was sent in reply to my own letter. I trust you will be kind enough to forward my humble letter to His Excellency the Governor-General."

Copy of the *kharita*[1] addressed to His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor-General of the Indian Empire:

"Now that the age of my dear daughter Nawáb Sultán Jahán Begam Sáhiba has reached 15 years, anxiety on account of her marriage overshadows all other affairs. To find her a suitable husband I have searched both amongst the members of my own family and among all the Afghán families of Bhopál, but I could find no one whose fitness was wholly beyond question. Of all the suitors who have appeared before either the late Begam or myself, there is, in my opinion, none more worthy to be my daughter's husband than he whom my

[1] *Kharita*, lit. a bag, or packet. The silken bag in which a letter is sent from one ruler to another is called a *kharita*, but the word usually signifies the letter itself.

mother brought from Akbarábád at the time of the durbar which was held in that city. With the consent of his elders, who journeyed from their homes to meet Her Highness in Akbarábád, this boy has been brought up in my Mother's palace. He is now 16 years of age, and his name is Ahmad Ali Khán. He is the son of the late Báki Muhammad Khán, an Afghán of the Mirázi Khail, who lived in Jalálábád, in the district of Muzaffarnagar. He is handsome in appearance, and of noble birth both on the side of his father and on the side of his mother. The latter is still living, and pays periodical visits to Bhopál from her home in Jalalábád, where she resides with her daughter. Besides this daughter and Ahmad Ali Khán she has no other children. In the course of his education here, Ahmad Ali Khán has read the whole of the Holy Korán, and has studied both Persian and English. In Jalalábád his ancestors have been honoured and respected for many generations. In order to find out what the general opinion in regard to this matter might be, I caused the qualifications of the various suitors to be written down, and copies to be sent to the nobles and the elders of the State, as well as to Sultán Jahán Begam, so that each might state whether, in his or her opinion, there was any boy in the list who seemed in all respects worthy of selection. All these persons, including Sultán Jahán Begam, placed their seals and signatures against the name Ahmad Ali Khán. Since, therefore, Sultán Jahán Begam, with whom alone the final decision rests, has given her approval, and since the members of my family, the nobles, Jágírdárs, and learned men of the State have unanimously signified their agreement with my humble opinion, I now desire to have the consent and approbation of Your Excellency, whose presence bestows grace upon this land, and whom the State

of Bhopál looks up to as its patron and protector. I trust that Your Excellency will honour my humble letter with a favourable reply, so that the anxiety which is now preying upon my mind may be taken away, and that we may proceed to the selection of an auspicious day for the celebration of this happy event."

As more than three months elapsed, and no reply to the above letters was received, the Begam, who was anxious that the marriage should be celebrated with as little delay as possible, wrote again to the Political Agent to inquire when an answer might be expected. Her letter was dated February 2nd, 1878 A.D.:

My anxiety for an answer to my *kharíta* to His Excellency the Governor-General, concerning the marriage of Nawáb Sultán Jahán Begam, must be my excuse for again troubling you on this matter. Kindly let me know whether the *kharíta* has been dispatched, and, if so, on what date. If it is still in your hands, I beg that it may be dispatched on the earliest possible date, and that notice of the same may be sent to me."

The reply to the above was received on February 18th:

• "Your letter inquiring about the dispatch of the *kharíta* concerning the marriage of Nawáb Sultán Jahán Begam, addressed to His Excellency the Governor-General of India, has reached me, and this letter of mine is to inform you that the delay in the dispatch of the said *kharíta* was due to the necessity of having it translated into English. This has now been done, and the *kharíta* was

forwarded on February 7th to the Honourable the Agent to the Governor-General in Central India. Information will be given to you as soon as a reply is received."

A letter, dated May 7th, 1873 (9th Rabbi-ul-awwal, 1289 A.H.), was also received from Colonel Watson, Acting Agent to the Governor-General in Central India, from which the following is an extract:

* "In regard to your representations concerning the urgent necessity for performing the marriage of your daughter, the Princess Nawab Sultán Jahan Begam, His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor-General has informed me that he considers it desirable that I should myself come to Bhopal and discuss the matter with you. I therefore propose, in accordance with His Excellency's instructions, to visit you during the ensuing week."

On May 9th, 1873 (11th Rabbi-ul-awwal, 1289, A.H.), the following reply to the above letter was written:

"Your letter has reached me this day. Your visit to Bhopál will be a source of great pleasure to me. The wish to see you has long been in my heart, but until now no circumstance has occurred to give rise to our meeting. My thanks are due to God for thus unexpectedly granting my desire. It will give me great pleasure to talk personally with you on the subject of the marriage of my daughter Sultán Jahán Begam. Nawab Muhammad Sidik Hasan Khán and Muhammad Jamál-ud-dín, the First Minister of the State, will, in accordance with established custom, take part in the interview, but besides these two gentlemen no other person will be present."

After the conclusion of this correspondence, the Agent to the Governor-General fulfilled his promise and came to Bhopál, where he was received with the customary formalities. On the 24th of Rabbi-ul-awwal, 1290 A.H., at 6 o'clock in the evening, he visited the Begam, and in the course of conversation informed her that the Viceroy much regretted that, owing to great press of work, he had been unable to send an early reply to her *kharita* regarding the marriage of Sultán Jahán Begam. Seeing that a month had now elapsed since the dispatch of the *kharita*, His Excellency desired to know whether, during this time, any change had taken place in Her Highness's views on the subject. My Mother replied that the opinion expressed in the *kharita* had been formed after much consideration, and with the help of the best advice she could obtain, and that nothing had since transpired to alter her determination. Her inquiries amongst the families of Bhopál had produced no one better fitted than Ahmad Ali Khán to be her son-in-law. The Agent to the Governor-General then asked the Begam whether she could answer for it that Ahmad Ali Khán would not make trouble in the State The Begam replied that, as far as she had been able to judge, the manners and conduct of Ahmad Ali Khán gave rise to no such apprehensions. She explained that he had been brought to Bhopál at the age of 7 by Nawáb Sikandar Begam, with whom, as well as with herself, the responsibility of his upbringing and education had rested. His family had always been respected by the British Government, and it gave

her great pleasure to say that his own behaviour left nothing to be desired, while his progress in his studies was, considering his age, more than satisfactory. He had now reached his eighteenth year, and the age of Sultán Jahán Begam was 16. On hearing this the Agent to the Governor-General said: "Since this is an important affair, and one with which the welfare of Sultán Jahán Begam is so closely connected, I should like to have an opportunity of hearing her approval from her own lips, and the Viceroy, too, is anxious that I should converse with her personally on the subject." "That," said my Mother, "is my own wish also. For although her seal and signature have already manifested her wishes, it is better that you should meet her and gauge her sentiments for yourself. I myself will retire, and she shall speak with you from behind the *purdah*." So saying, my Mother went to rejoin Mrs. Humphrey and her other lady guests, while I was sent to the Agent of the Governor-General. After a few general remarks he said to me: "The document relating to your proposed marriage has been sent to me. May I ask if your seal and signature, which the document bears, were placed there of your own free will?" Although a verbal reply to this question was a considerable shock to my oriental sense of modesty, yet since my Mother had told me that amongst Europeans and Muhammadans it was not a matter about which the least shame need be felt, I answered frankly that it was by my own will and pleasure that I had affixed my seal and signature to the marriage proposal. The Agent to the Governor-

General then said to me in English: "Is it your wish that I should forward this document to His Excellency the Viceroy?" I answered with the single word "yes," and remained silent. He then inquired if there was anything else that I wished to say. To divert the conversation from myself, I said that I had only to request him to be good enough to convey my compliments to His Excellency the Viceroy and his daughter. With this the interview came to an end, and I went into the room where Mrs. Humphrey and other ladies were sitting.

On the 24th of Jamádi-ul-awwal, 1291 A.H., Mrs. Humphrey wrote to Nawáb Shah Jahán Begam, giving her the pleasing intelligence that the negotiations with the Government had been brought to a favourable termination, and offering at the same time her sincere congratulations. On the 7th of the same month, the Political Agent himself came to Bhopál, and with his own hand delivered to Her Highness the *kharita* of His Excellency the Governor-General. It ran as follows:

* "To my well-beloved and respected Nawáb Begam Sáhiba: may Almighty God keep her under His protection.

"I much regret that, owing to heavy work, I have been unable to reply earlier to your letter of October 21st, 1872, in which you request sanction for the marriage of your daughter Nawáb Sultán Jahán Begam with Ahmad Ali Khán, son of the late Báki Muhammad Khán. I should have been glad, and I think it would have been for the advantage of the State, if a suitable choice could have

been made from among the nobles of your own family. But inasmuch as you assure me that you know of none better fitted to be your son-in-law than Ahmad Ali Khán, and that the elders of your family and the nobles of the State have given him preference over all other suitors, and since Nawáb Sultán Jahán Begam herself approves of the choice you have made, and has signified the same to my Agent at a personal interview which took place by my own instructions—taking all these facts into consideration, I have no hesitation in giving my consent to the marriage; and I trust Ahmad Ali Khán will, by his wisdom, his learning, his manners, and his habits, show himself to be worthy of the high position he will occupy as the husband of the heir-apparent to the State of Bhopal, and that he will so conduct himself as to win your daughter's affection and respect; for it is only with the assurance that this important step meets with her full approbation that my assent is now given. It is my earnest desire that this union may realize the advantages you anticipate from it, and that it may conduce to the life-long happiness and prosperity of your daughter, and to the welfare of the State. Be assured that I am ever solicitous for your own health and welfare, in regard to which I beg you will from time to time keep me informed."

In accordance with the custom of the State, information of the receipt of this *kharita* was sent to the Nâwáb Kudsia Begam:

"A *kharita* has arrived from the Governor-General and Viceroy of the Indian Empire, dated June 2nd, 1878, to the effect that His Excellency approves of the marriage which we have arranged between Nawáb Sultán Jahán Begam and Ahmad

Ali Khán, the son of the late Báki Muhammad Khán. May God, in His mercy, bring it to a happy fulfilment. It seemed to us fitting that you should be informed of this matter, and we therefore send you this letter."

The Begam sent some *purdah* ladies to convey the intelligence to Muhammadi Begam, who presented the messengers with handsome robes of honour, and sent a letter of congratulation to the Begam, begging her at the same time to accept, on behalf of the bride, the gift of a wedding costume, a request which was graciously acceded to. On the 10th of Jamádi-ul-awwal, 1290 A.H., Ahmad Ali Khán was granted an allowance of Rs. 1000 a month, as pocket-money, until he should be finally settled in his own home, and instructions were sent to the Naib Bakshi to appoint a *sowár* and an orderly to be in attendance on him. On the 20th of Shábán, 1290 A.H., the betrothal ceremony was performed with all due rites, and this was followed by the ceremony of *namak chashi*, which took place after evening prayer on the 13th of Ramazán-ul-mubárak.

The Begam then issued orders that according to Indian usage a festival should be held on every holiday in the calendar, so that for the further space of one year the character of my betrothed husband might be watched and tested. Although my Mother's intentions were perfectly good, this delay proved unfortunate, for it afforded Sidik Hasan Khán abundant opportunities for harassing Ahmad Ali Khán, whose life from that time began to resemble that of a state prisoner. Sentries

were posted outside his sleeping-apartment, and no one was permitted to have access to him, while he himself could not go forth without permission. To such an extent was his freedom curtailed that he was not allowed to hunt, ride, walk, or to enjoy any form of recreation whatever. But he bore all these trials with such exemplary patience, that even his worst enemies could find no blot in his behaviour. Everything possible was done to enrage and irritate him, but he never lost his self-control, and displayed all through this period of probation tact and wisdom far beyond his years. Fate willed that Ahmad Ali Khán should be my husband, and all the machinations of Sidik Hasan Khán and his friends could not alter Fate's decree.

The months passed rapidly away, and the time came to make final preparations for the wedding, which was now definitely fixed to take place on the 23rd of Zil Hijjah, 1291 A.H. (February 1st, 1874 A.D.). Invitations were sent to many distinguished Europeans and Indians, as well as to near and distant relatives of the family. But Nawáb Kudsia Begam, the wish of whose heart was to see my marriage, and who had expended lákhs of rupees on jewellery and other wedding gifts, was not included amongst the number. The Agent to the Governor-General was away on tour, and could not be present; but Colonel Osborne, the Political Agent, and Mrs. Osborne accepted the invitation, and came to Bhopál some days in advance to assist in the entertainment of the European guests.

At the various halting-places between Itarsi and Bhopál arrangements were made to make

the visitors as comfortable as possible on their journey; and in Bhopál itself an extensive camp was pitched for their accommodation on the Jahángírábád parade-ground, where entertainments of every kind were provided to make the days pass pleasantly. On the 22nd of Zil Hijjah, the Political Agent and Mrs. Osborne paid visits at different hours to the Kudsia Begam. At these visits, the conversation naturally turned on the marriage festivities, and Mrs. Osborne told the Begam that she ought to be taking part in them. "Nay," she replied sorrowfully; "do you go and enjoy them! Had I been invited, I too would gladly go, for what else should I wish to do if not to rejoice with those who are dear to me?" And to Colonel Barstow she said, "Yes, sáhib, I also take delight in the marriage of Sultán Jahán Begam. How her Grandmother would have rejoiced to see this day! But she has passed away, and her death broke my old heart." I do not know how her words affected the Political Agent, but the court Vakil, who was present at both these interviews, was so deeply moved that on the same day he wrote an account of what had passed to Shah Jahán Begam, beseeching that the invitation might even then be sent, for in the time of Nawáb Sikandar Begam no public function ever took place at which the Kudsia Begam was not present. But this appeal was unheeded, and the very existence of the oldest and most venerable representative of the Bhopál family was ignored. My readers can judge how keenly she must have felt this treatment, and what

sadness must have filled her heart as, seated alone in her home in the Shaukat Mahal, the merry din of the marriage festivities was borne to her ears. The Kudsia Begam was an affectionate and peace-loving lady. For many years she had shown no desire to take part in public affairs. Since the death of her daughter, for whom she never ceased to grieve, she had lived the life of a recluse. She asked no one for help, and indeed, as far as the things of this world were concerned, she needed none, for she was herself rich ; she loved nothing better than to give pleasure to others, and her charity and liberality were unbounded. It was a cruel deed to make my marriage an opportunity for needlessly wounding so generous and gentle a nature.

The marriage ceremony itself took place on the afternoon of the 23rd of Zil Hijjah. The palace was elaborately and skilfully decorated. Detachments of the Bhopál state army were drawn up on either side of the courtyard, and the band of the 22nd Regiment was in attendance. Inside the palace were assembled the relatives of the family, the chief servants of the State, and the native guests, all wearing durbar dress. At 4 o'clock, the European guests arrived. As they were received on the steps of the palace by Sidik Hasan Khán, the troops presented arms, and the band played a wedding march. When all of them had alighted, they were conducted to the guest-chamber, where the gentlemen were assigned seats on the right-hand side of a screened doorway behind which Nawáb Shah Jahán Begam was seated, while the ladies passed behind the screen into the inner apart-

NAWAB IHTISHAM-UL-MULK

At the time of his marriage

ment. Shortly afterwards, the bridegroom arrived, attended by the chief members of his family. The guard of honour presented arms as he alighted from his carriage, and the band played the national air of Bhopál. *Chobdárs* in gold-laced liveries, with gold sticks in their hands, conducted him into the presence of the assembled guests, and announced his approach by chanting in a loud monotone his names, titles, and virtues. All the guests rose to greet him as he entered, and he acknowledged and returned their salutations with a dignified courtesy which well became the occasion. His dress was of coloured Benares silk, and was surmounted by a richly coloured and costly turban. He wore a necklace of topazes, pearls, and diamonds, and from a jewelled belt about his waist hung a magnificent Ispahán sword. This dress had been, in accordance with the customs of Bhopál, presented to him by the State. His handsome appearance and dignified demeanour made a great impression on the whole assembly, and spontaneous congratulations and good wishes were showered upon him, and prayers for his future happiness were heard on every side. Sidik Hasan Khán shook hands with him, and conducted him to a chair next to his own, the *chobdárs* again raising their chant until he became seated. After the reception of the bridegroom, Maulavi Muhammad Jamál-ud-dín Khán Sáhib, with Sidik Hasan Khán, and Latíf Muhammad Khán, my half-brother, came to my apartment (I was not *purdah* to these three gentlemen), and, in accordance with Muhammadan law, asked me if I were prepared to take Ahmad Ali Khán as my

husband. I replied that such was my will, and the three gentlemen then withdrew, and, going before the bridegroom, repeated the same question. He was at this time seated on a golden throne, overshadowed by a canopy of rich cloth embroidered in gold and silver. He answered with the single word *kubúl*, that is, 'agreed,' whereupon Kázi Zain-ul-abedín approached the throne, and read the marriage *khutbah*. Other religious formalities followed, and a sum of two crores of rupees was settled upon me as my marriage portion. This brought the ceremony to an end, and all present, with loud cries of *bismillah*, raising their hands above their heads, prayed to the great God to vouchsafe to bridegroom and bride lives full of happiness and prosperity. Then, amidst shouts of applause, the bridegroom left the golden throne, and seated himself again by Sidik Hasan Khán.

A purse of *ashrafís* and other gifts were presented to the Kázi by the bridegroom. Each of the bridegroom's friends who had come from his country to take part in the marriage received a *khilát*, and *'itr* and *pán* and *mukáish* were distributed.[1] According to established custom, Ahmad Ali Khán had to sign a marriage agreement,[2] to which the signature of the Political Agent as witness was also attached. Many of the clauses of the agreement were such as could never be legally enforced, but they serve as an illustration of the

[1] According to Indian etiquette, no reception is complete which does not conclude with the time-honoured custom of distributing *'itr* and *pan* (*i.e.* perfume and betel) among the guests, the most honoured of whom should receive it from the hand of their host.

[2] See Appendix B.

skilful attempts made by Sidik Hasan Khán to obtain a hold over my husband. In the evening an assault-at-arms was given by the state army, after which the city was illuminated, and a display of fireworks brought to a close this long-to-be-remembered day.

The palace which was fixed upon as our residence was the same that I had always lived in, and was only separated by a doorway from that of my Mother, so that it was possible to pass from one to the other without the trouble of driving. On the 24th of Zil Hijjah, the bridegroom entertained all the Indian and European guests at a banquet. The bridegroom received from Shah Jahán Begam the title of Nazír-ud-daulah Sultán Dula. The title "Nawáb" was not given, as it had already been conferred on Sidik Hasan Khán. He received also the *jágírs* of Mahalpúr, Ambapáni, and Rámgarh, the united revenues of which amounted to Rs. 40,002. 14. 6. These *jágírs* adjoined my own.

On the wedding festivities the sum of Rs. 6,57,612. 13. 3 was expended, as follows:

The Bridegroom's outfit	Rs.	1,68,787	7	9
The Bride's trousseau	Rs.	4,38,028	8	3
General expenses of the marriage . .	Rs.	50,796	14	3
Total	Rs.	6,57,612	14	3

My own *jágír* consisted of some fifteen villages from the *parganas* of Gadhi-ambapáni, Bamhori, and Bilkisganj, of which the total revenue amounted to Rs. 80,382. As this amount was sufficient for my personal expenses, no addition was made to it.

On the 25th of Zil Hijjah, my Mother caused

the ceremony of *chauthi* to be performed in the Bágh Nishát-Afzah (the Garden of Delight). By 8 o'clock in the morning the whole of the state forces, horse, foot, and artillery, with the *máhi marátib*,[1] were assembled in gallant array, occupying the entire length of the road from the Shaukat Mahal to the Pír Darwáza. Shortly after 8 o'clock, I myself in a *palki*, and the Nawáb Sáhib mounted on a handsomely caparisoned elephant, went in procession to the garden, attended by the nobles and chief officials of the State. The whole city came out to witness the sight, and our route was lined with crowds of enthusiastic and joyous spectators. When we arrived at the entrance to the garden, and the Nawáb Sáhib was about to descend from his elephant, Maulavi Jamál-ud-dín Sáhib, the First Minister, came forward, and bidding him tarry, addressed him in the following words:

"Hear me, beloved! Hear, and understand!
For he whose life on noble lines is planned,
Will spurn the World's red wine, and take, instead,
The cup of wisdom from the sage's hand.

"The high rank to which you have been raised, these outward signs of dignity and power which you behold around you, and which are assembled here to do you honour, the lands and the wealth which are now in your possession—all these you owe to the favour and goodness of God; and it is your duty to render thanks to Him not only with your lips, but in your life, that your gratitude may be manifest to all men through the righteousness

[1] *Máhi marátib* (*Máhi*, a fish, and *Marátib*, dignities) are certain honours of which the privilege is especially conferred on princes and great nobles; they are denoted by the figure of a fish, two balls, and other insignia, and are carried, in state processions, upon elephants.

THE NISHAT AFZAH GARDEN

of your conduct and the wisdom of your words. Be not puffed up with the pomp of power, but walk always in the paths of virtue and humility.

> "A man, indeed, is he whose heart,
> When Fortune smiles, from pride is free;
> Whose simple faith in God remains
> Unshaken in adversity.

"High duties and responsibilities lie before you. Seek, therefore, after wisdom, and let patience, sympathy, and honesty characterize all your dealings. Above all, keep continually in your mind this sacred precept: 'show honour to thy parents and thy elders, and let arrogance and conceit be far from thee.'

"I have read the Holy Korán with you, and therefore I may style myself your teacher, and it is in the character of a teacher as well as a friend that I offer you this advice."

The bridegroom bowed his head, in token that his teacher's words had not fallen on heedless ears. And, indeed, this sage's advice was accepted in the same earnest spirit in which it was given; it remained indelibly engraven on my husband's heart, and as years went by its good effect became more and more evident. The veteran Minister, who had grown grey in the service of the State, standing in the presence of the assembled troops and nobles, and gravely admonishing the handsome young bridegroom, was an impressive sight, and one not easily to be forgotten, while the words which he uttered deserve, for their simplicity and their wisdom, to be written in letters of gold.

In Bhopál the *chauthi* is usually followed by another ancient ceremony called *jumah*, in which

bride and bridegroom are invited to a feast by some near relative, and are presented with *khiláts* and other gifts. The Kudsia Begam, although she had taken no part in the marriage, desired to entertain us in this fashion, but we were not permitted to accept her invitation; and when she again begged that we might be allowed to go, since all her preparations were complete, and her desire to present us with the gifts she had made ready was very great, she received from my Mother the following reply:

"I have on several occasions informed you that there is no necessity for you to put yourself to this trouble. God, in His bounty, has satisfied all the wants of Sultán Jahán Begam, and she stands in need of nothing more."

The pain that this reply must have inflicted on her proud and generous heart can easily be conceived. And what was the reason of it? Simply this—that Sidik Hasan Khán, knowing that her days could not be many in this world, did not choose that so much valuable property should go out of her house, for he intended that it should find its way into his own possession, as, indeed, it eventually did. Would that he had helped himself to my money instead, and that the last days of this pious and venerable lady had been allowed to pass in peace.

In the course of the wedding festivities, Shah Jahán Begam did not forget the poor. Money was liberally distributed amongst them, and many orphan girls who were old enough to marry

received money sufficient to enable them to bear the heavy burden of expense which, even amongst the poorest families, a marriage always entails.

I cannot conclude this chapter better than by giving some account of the habits and eminent virtues of my husband.

The Nawáb Sáhib was the fourth in descent from the famous Sálár Mír Muhammad Jalál Khán, of whose family, and the honourable connection it has always had with the Government, a full description may be found in the *Tárikh Jalál*. As I am anxious not to burden my readers with unnecessary matter, I shall omit all details of family history and confine my description to the Nawáb Sáhib himself. He was born in the month of Rabbi-us-sáni, 1270 A.H., at Jalálábád, in which city his childhood was spent. In 1283 A.H., Nawáb Sikandar Begam brought him to Bhopál, where, as has already been told, he received his education and his military training. For the latter, special instructors were engaged, under whom he quickly acquired proficiency and skill in all military exercises. The accompanying portrait affords a good idea of his handsome countenance and manly figure. In conversation his voice was gentle, and his courteous manner commanded the respect of all, whether young or old, with whom he came in contact. He was of a simple and contented disposition, humble in his own estimation, and quick to recognize merit in others. He possessed all the courage characteristic of his race, combined with an unusual amount of self-control and a natural fitness to command. Had he lived in less peace-

able times, he would, doubtless, have won rank and fame as a military leader. A firm friend and a generous foe, he was ever ready to succour those in distress, and to pardon the wrong-doer. In his own family, and particularly amongst his children, he always bore a cheerful and happy countenance, and even strangers found it difficult to resist the charm of his manner, which at once placed them at their ease and compelled their admiration. Hunting, shooting, and *chaurang* were his favourite recreations, and he was a bold and accomplished horseman. Of the more intellectual pursuits, architecture had for him, as it has had for so many of the Musalmán rulers of India, a strong fascination, and many of the buildings which he left show that he possessed not only scientific knowledge but elegant taste. The buildings in the Bágh Hayat Afzah and the Sadar Manzil (House of Council, so named because it is here that I hold my council meetings), are examples of his architectural skill, as well as of his real love for such works; for the cost of both these buildings was defrayed from his and my *jágírs*. He had a keen appreciation for natural scenery, and frequently retired for a week at a time to a beautiful place named Samarda in his own *jágír*, where he had built himself a shooting-box and a capacious villa. Zia-ud-dín Tekri, where I have now built my own residence, was the place which pleased him beyond all others, and for this reason I have named it Ahmadábád; and, indeed, it would be hard to find a more lovely spot.

The Nawáb Sáhib fully appreciated the high rank to which he had been raised by his marriage

with me, but he never presumed upon his position, nor was his behaviour ever inconsistent with it. To me he was a true and faithful helpmate, and I derived the greatest benefit from his wisdom and experience. Political officers also had many opportunities of judging of his capabilities, of which they formed a high opinion. Colonel Barr[1] and Colonel Meade, Agent to the Governor-General, were particularly struck with his ability; and they used to say that, were he in England, he could aspire to the highest offices, and become a distinguished statesman. One statesman-like quality he certainly possessed in a pre-eminent degree, and that was tact, and nowhere did he display this more than in his attitude towards family feuds. These often assumed large and complicated dimensions, but he kept aloof from them himself, and desired that I should do the same; and thus, although they were a source of grief and annoyance to him, his enemies could never turn them to account against him. Towards Nawáb Shah Jahán Begam he showed all the affection and respect due from a son to a mother, and she on her side, so long as Sidik Hasan Khán abstained from his machinations, treated him with conspicuous kindness. It was the Nawáb Sáhib's boast, and a matter for which he thanked God, that he envied none, but was rather an object of envy to all other men. By his refined manners and habits, his nobility of character, and his high abilities, he did more than justify the choice which Nawáb Sikandar Begam and Nawáb Shah Jahán Begam had made.

[1] Now Colonel Sir David W. Keith Barr, K.C.S.I.

CHAPTER VI

A ROYAL VISIT—BIRTH OF BILKIS JAHAN BEGAM AND OF NAWAB NASRULLAH KHÁN

TOWARDS the end of the year 1875, it was known that His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales was about to visit India. It would be difficult to convey an adequate idea of the pleasure with which this intelligence was received in all parts of the country. More than a century had elapsed since the English had laid the foundations of their Eastern Empire, and during that period neither the king nor the heir-apparent to the throne had set foot on Indian soil. But the name of Queen Victoria had long been a household word amongst all sections of the people, and the prospects of welcoming to their own land the eldest son of their beloved ruler filled them with unbounded joy. From time immemorial Eastern races have been accustomed to see authority vested in the hands of a single individual, and to regard the person of a king as the incarnation of power and dignity, an attitude which is both sanctified by tradition and enjoyed as a religious belief. This is particularly true of the peoples of India; for although British rule has resulted in the growth of Western

modes of thought, yet the worship of "the hero as king" is as natural to them now as it was in the days of Akbar the Great. They love their Emperor with a deep and sincere love, and whatever democratic principles have found their way into the administration of India they look upon as subordinate parts of a whole which he alone has fashioned, and which he alone controls.

To no part of India did the tidings of the royal visit bring greater joy and satisfaction than to Bhopál; for from the very first days of its existence the relations of the State with the dominant Power have been of the closest and most cordial nature. Nawáb Shah Jahán Begam at once instructed the state Vakíl to write to the Political Agent for official confirmation of the report, so that a *kharíta* of welcome might be dispatched to the Governor-General. On June 26th, 1875, the Political Agent wrote in reply that the report was true, but that he was not yet in possession of any details. On August 4th of the same year, Sir Henry Daly, C.B., Agent to the Governor-General for Central India, sent a letter to Her Highness, informing her that the Prince would arrive in India at the end of December, and that His Excellency the Viceroy, by order of Her Majesty the Queen, would hold a Chapter of the Order of the Star of India in Calcutta, and that His Excellency invited Her Highness, as a Knight Grand Commander of the Order, to be present on the occasion. Nawáb Shah Jahán Begam's reply to this communication was dated August 5th, and was to the following effect:

"Before the receipt of your letter I sent, through you, two *kharítas* to His Excellency the Governor-General; one to express my joy at the news of the approaching visit of the Prince, and the other to say that I would very gladly attend the Durbar in question, should nothing occur to prevent my doing so."

On August 16th Sir Henry Daly sent the following reply:

"Since writing your *kharíta* of 28th ultimo to the Viceroy, my note, announcing that the Prince of Wales will hold a Chapter of the Star of India in Calcutta, will have reached you. You will remember that on such occasions the members of the Order only take part in the Ceremony, and that this is not a Durbar or assembly for any other purpose.

"Should Your Highness be prevented from attending in Calcutta at the Investiture, I am sure your unavoidable absence will be regretted. There will, however, be other opportunities during the visit of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales of Chiefs meeting him. I will write distinctly on this matter directly the programme is settled, but it is the intention of the Viceroy to fix several places at which Chiefs and Nobles may pay their duty to the Queen's Heir. But the assembly in Calcutta will be, I believe, confined to the members of the Order of the Star of India.

"Under these circumstances probably you will prefer that I should not forward your *kharíta* of the 28th ultimo. I will keep it till I hear from Your Highness."

In the course of her reply Nawáb Shah Jahán Begam wrote:

"I did not decline to be present at the Durbar, for I am most desirous to meet His Royal Highness on that occasion, and, God willing, I shall do so. But I stated that in case the confinement of my daughter Sultán Jahán Begam should prevent me from leaving Bhopál, I would send my husband to Calcutta to represent me. Since, however, you, as my friend, advise me to go, it will be better to return the *kharíta* to me, so that the necessary emendations may be made. That portion in which I ask for information regarding the Prince's visit may stand as it is, for the preparations which I may have to make depend on the answer I receive to these inquiries. There is no one who at this time does not wish to give evidence of his loyalty to the heir-apparent to the throne, and this must be specially true of one who is bound, as I am, by the strongest ties of affection to the British Government."

After a few days, the following *kharita*, dated August 16th, was received from His Excellency, Lord Northbrook, Governor-General of India:

"Your letter of friendship, dated July 12th, 1875, in which you express your joy and pleasure at the forthcoming visit of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales to India, and in which you desire me to convey to His Royal Highness your warm and loyal greetings, has reached me through my Agent in Central India. These renewed assurances of your fealty, and of your desire for the increase of the honour and prosperity of the British Throne and the Empire, are a source of great gratification to me. It will give me much pleasure to convey your greetings and felicitations to His Royal Highness on the first opportunity. A letter from you is always welcome to me. I hope I may

often have the happiness of hearing from you of your welfare and prosperity, for which, be assured, I am deeply solicitous."

Shortly after the receipt of this *kharíta*, a copy of a communication, addressed to the Agent to the Governor-General for Central India, by the Secretary to the Government of India, was sent to Nawab Shah Jahán Begam. In this it was stated that ruling chiefs might, when visiting the Prince of Wales, present to him any articles of manufacture peculiar to their own States, provided that they were not of great value. In forwarding this communication,[1] the Political Agent requested the Begam, in the event of her wishing to take advantage of this privilege, to furnish, as soon as possible, a list of the articles which she proposed to present, with their approximate values.

The Political Agent in Bhopal, in a memorandum

[1] The communication of the Secretary of State to the Government of India was as follows:

From the Secretary to the Government of India, to the Agent to the Governor-General for Central India, dated August 5th, 1875 (3rd Rajab, 1291 A.H.), No. 2179.

1. It is the desire of His Excellency the Governor-General in Council that the following directions should be communicated to you, concerning the presentation of *nazarana*, and the receiving of *khilats* by Ruling Chiefs when paying visits to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales.

2. His Excellency desires that the Chiefs who visit His Royal Highness at Bombay, or Calcutta, or at any other place, should not be put to more expense than is necessary. His Excellency does not intend to hold State Durbars, and the presentation of *nazarána* and *khilats*, which is usual at such times, will not take place. He will, however, receive visits from the Chiefs, and pay visits in return, on which occasions all the customary formalities will be observed.

3. The same procedure will be followed in regard to visits paid to, and received from, His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales.

4. It is probable that the Rulers of State may wish to present to

dated August 30th, informed Her Highness that all Knights attending the Chapter of the Order of the Star of India should wear the robes and insignia of the Order, and that these could be renewed if necessary. He also recommended the dispatch of a trustworthy agent to Calcutta to make arrangements for Her Highness's lodgings. A *kharita* was also received from Lord Northbrook stating that the Chapter would take place on January 1st, 1876. The official invitation to the same was sent by the Secretary to the Order of the Star of India.

In her second *kharita* to His Excellency the Viceroy, the Begam had made inquiries about the arrangements that would be made for her lodging in Calcutta. As a considerable time elapsed without any reply being received to these inquiries, a reminder was sent to the Political Agent. On September 20th, however, a letter was received from that officer, stating that a house would be engaged for Her Highness in Calcutta, the rent of which would not be charged to the State, and that Her Highness's private apartments would be supplied

His Royal Highness specimens of the products or manufactures of their own territories.

5. His Excellency the Governor-General sees no objection to such a procedure, provided the articles presented are not of great value or of large size.

6. Chiefs availing themselves of this privilege should furnish His Excellency, through Political Agents or other official channels, with a list describing, and giving the approximate values of, such articles as they may wish to present, so that the consent of His Royal Highness may be obtained. No presents offered under conditions other than those stated in the foregoing clauses will be accepted by His Royal Highness.

7. These presents will be placed in the Royal Museum, and they should therefore consist of such articles as may serve as mementoes of His Royal Highness's visit to India.

with furniture by Government. But if, in addition to these, a public reception-room was required, arrangements for its decoration and furniture would have to be made by the officials of the State; who, however, would be helped with supplies from the government *tosha-khána.*[1]

A second letter from the Political Agent stated that the Prince of Wales would hold no Durbar in Calcutta, but only a Chapter as above stated, at which only those persons who were Knights of the Order were qualified to take a prominent part; and that it was, therefore, all the more necessary that the Begam of Bhopál should be present. The Secretary to the Order also wrote a second time, saying that if anything should prevent Her Highness leaving Bhopál, she would have other opportunities, either at Jabbalpúr or at Akbarábad, of meeting the Prince of Wales. But he hoped that she would, according to her original intention, and according to the strong desire expressed in her letter of September 18th, come to Calcutta in time to attend the Chapter, at which, he felt sure, Her Highness would consider it an honour to be present.

These matters having been so far settled, the Begam wrote to inform the Political Agent that she proposed to send the state Vakíl to Calcutta to superintend the arrangements for her lodging. She requested the Political Agent to

[1] *Tosha-khána*, lit. a wardrobe, or storeroom. "Each Native State and the Foreign Office of the Government of India has a *tosha-khána*, where stores of costly robes, jewellery, trappings, and housings are kept. It is from such stores that *khilats* are given, and State processions are provided by Native States" (*Táj-ul-Ikbal*, p. 126, n.).

LORD NORTHBROOK.

provide him with a letter of introduction to the Foreign Secretary, stating that accommodation would be required for about two hundred and fifty people, besides horses and carriages. The Vakíl, accompanied by the Darogha of the *kár-khána* proceeded, on the 1st of Ramazán, to Calcutta, with instructions to inspect and report fully upon the house which should be selected, as well as to take measures for its adornment. Accordingly the Vakíl, on arrival in Calcutta, with the assistance of the Foreign Secretary and the Superintendent of the *tosha-khána*, was enabled to see the house and the manner in which it had been arranged, a detailed account of which, together with a plan of the building, he sent to the Begam. This house occupied one of the best sites in the Matia Burj.

On October 23rd, 1875, the State Vakíl asked the Political Agent if he could ascertain the opinion of His Excellency the Viceroy in regard to the propriety of the Begam's remaining *purdah* during her stay in Calcutta, and in regard to her paying and receiving visits, as no answer had been received to the *kharíta* in which information on these points was requested. The Political Agent happened to come to Bhopál at this time to inspect the robes and insignia of the Order of the Star of India, which Her Highness was proposing to wear at the Chapter, and in the evening of the same day he had a private audience with her, at which only Nawáb Sidik Hasan Khán and the First Minister of the State were present, and the *purdah* question was discussed. The Begam, anxious for more reasons than one to conform to the requirements

of Oriental etiquette, quoted the examples of many Ránees and Begams to support her view of the question. But the Political Agent pointed out that if she remained *purdah* at the time of the visits of the Prince of Wales and the Viceroy, these visits would be deprived to a large extent of their official significance. For some time the matter was warmly debated, but at last my Mother decided to bow to the necessity of the occasion, and consented to appear at the Chapter and at other functions wearing a *burkha.* It must not be supposed that Nawáb Shah Jahan Begam in any way lacked the loyal sentiments which have always distinguished the Begams of Bhopál, or that she underrated the honour of being received by the Prince of Wales and the Viceroy. Her sole motive in raising the *purdah* question was to promote the honour and dignity of Sidik Hasan Khán by appointing him her representative; so that, in fact, he might occupy a position similar to that of former Nawábs who were actual rulers of the State. With this object alone she wished, first of all, to send Sidik Hasan Khán to welcome the Prince, on her behalf, in Bombay, and afterwards to make him her representative on public occasions in Calcutta, for which latter the *purdah* difficulty was to be the excuse. As a matter of fact, her plans for the advancement of Sidik Hasan Khán were impossible of fulfilment, nor was the fact of her being *purdah* a legitimate excuse, for the laws of Islám do not prohibit a Musalmán lady from appearing at public assemblies in a *burkha,* nor is there any reason why the ruler of a State should

not go abroad clad in this fashion if she wishes to do so. Her Highness had, however, been induced to believe that allowing Sidik Hasan Khán to represent her and act for her, in the manner proposed, could in no way detract from her own dignity, while it would very materially add to that of her husband, and, in her anxiety that he should receive all the honours that Government could bestow upon him, she was willing to put herself in the background, and to forgo her own share of the advantages and honours which this unique occasion would afford. That this was so can be easily seen from the following communication, which at this time was sent to the Madár-ul-mohám :

Letter addressed to the MADAR-UL-MOHAM, *by* NAWAB SHAH JAHAN BEGAM.

"The *kharita* received from His Excellency the Governor-General states that His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales will disembark at Bombay. As many Indian Chiefs will be present there to bid His Royal Highness welcome, I am anxious that my own greetings and good wishes should not be wanting at such a time. Owing to the approaching confinement of my daughter Nawáb Sultán Jahán Begam, it will be difficult for me to go to Bombay myself, and I therefore desire to send the Nawáb Sáhib in my stead. But should the Agent to the Governor-General for Central India sanction this arrangement, it is necessary that the Government should show to the Nawáb Sáhib, in Bombay, the same marks of distinction as would be shown to myself, so that the dignity of the State may be upheld in the presence of the other Chiefs."

A great deal more correspondence on the same subject took place between Her Highness and the Political Agent, which it is not necessary to reproduce. From what I have already said, and from what follows, my readers can easily perceive my Mother's design, and the methods by which she endeavoured to accomplish it.

Although there was no real necessity for the ruler of a State to be accompanied by the heir-apparent when attending public durbars, and although only twenty days had elapsed since the birth of my daughter, so that I was in too weak a state to bear the fatigues of a long journey, my Mother decided that I was to go with her to Calcutta, for it was neither practicable, nor in accordance with her wishes, that I should remain alone in Bhopál. She also told me that the same arrangements would be made for me as had been made for herself by Nawáb Sikandar Begam on a like occasion, and that there would be no necessity for me to appear in public in a *burkha*. As it had always been my habit to act according to the orders of my parents, I signified my readiness to comply with her desire. This conversation took place in the morning, and on the evening of the very same day my Mother again came to me and said that, as she herself was going to appear in a *burkha*, it was fitting that I, too, should adopt the same course. I had no choice but to agree, and at once set about making the necessary preparations for the journey.

The secret of these contradictory orders was this. Sidik Hasan Khán, finding that his plans for

making himself the Begam's representative had come to nought, determined that, if he could not occupy the highest place, he would at any rate try to occupy the next highest, and the possibility of my being unwilling to go to Calcutta, or of my refusing to appear in public in a *burkha*, seemed to offer the chance he was looking for. It was, therefore, at his instigation that the order for the *burkha* was given.

These controversies being settled, I prepared for my departure, and dispatched to Calcutta all such necessaries as were not likely to be available there. On the 1st of Zil Kádah, 1292 A.H. (November 30th, 1875) Ghulám Mahbub Khán, Mohtamim of the State *kár-khána*, was sent on in advance with the heavy luggage, tents, and carriages along with seventy-eight men. He reached Itársi on the 5th of Zil Kádah, and, proceeding thence by rail, arrived at Calcutta on the 10th, and took up his quarters in a bungalow close to that which the Government had selected for ourselves.

On Monday, the 7th of Zil Kádah, Her Highness, myself, Nawáb Ihtishám-ul-mulk, and Nawáb Sidik Hasan Khán, with about a hundred retainers and servants, set out from Bhopál. We reached Itársi in three days, and met the Political Agent there. From Itársi we went by rail to Calcutta, where we arrived on Wednesday, December 16th. We were met at the station by Captain Medif, A.D.C., and Mr. Keary, Under-Secretary to Government, who made kind inquiries after our welfare, and then Her Highness, myself, and

Sidik Hasan Khán drove in a closed carriage to our lodging. As we were the guests of His Excellency the Viceroy all the arrangements for our meals were in the hands of the Government, and during our month's stay in Calcutta we were entertained in a most sumptuous fashion.

On the 23rd of Zil Kádah (December 23rd), the Begam paid a State visit to the Viceroy, accompanied by the following nobles and officials of the State: Nawáb Sidik Hasan Khán; Nawáb Ihtishám-ul-mulk; Mián Nazír Muhammad Khán; Munshi Jamál-ud-dín Khán Sáhib, late Prime Minister; Mián Núr-ul-hasan Khán; and Mián Alamgír Muhammad Khán. In the afternoon of the same day His Excellency returned the visit at our lodging, Sidik Hasan Khán escorting him from the house of Sir Salár Jang. Owing to my ill-health I was not present on this occasion, but I took part in all the other receptions. December 23rd was the happy day on which His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales arrived in Calcutta. All the ruling Chiefs present in Calcutta assembled at the landing-place to bid him welcome. By the special favour of His Excellency the Viceroy, the Begam and I, instead of being at the landing-place, were permitted to await His Royal Highness at Government House, in company with His Excellency's daughters, where we had the privilege of paying our loyal respects.

On December 24th, Her Highness and I, attended by a few of the nobles of the State, paid a state visit to His Royal Highness at Government House. A guard of honour was stationed

H.R.H. THE PRINCE OF WALES, 1875.

at the entrance and presented arms as we drove up, and the Foreign Secretary and the Under Secretary received us at the door of our carriage, while guns were fired by the saluting battery. We were then conducted to the audience hall, which was about fifty yards from the carriage. This chamber was furnished partly in European and partly in Eastern fashion. It contained many costly and beautiful ornaments, and the roof was hung with glass chandeliers of great beauty and fine workmanship. The entire floor was covered with rich carpets; and down the centre a pathway was formed of scarlet cloth along which we walked, and on either side of which *chobdárs*, in liveries of red and gold, stood at intervals. His Excellency, wearing full durbar dress, was seated in the chair of state. When Her Highness had approached to within forty paces, His Excellency advanced to meet her, and shaking her by the hand inquired after her health. The Political Agent acted as interpreter, and Her Highness inquired after the health of His Excellency. The latter then shook hands with me, and said that he hoped I had not suffered from the fatigues of my long journey to Calcutta. I replied to his inquiries with befitting modesty, and, since I was able to converse somewhat in English, my answers did not require to be translated. After His Excellency had spoken to Nawáb Sidik Hasan Khán, Nawáb Ihtishám-ul-mulk, and others of our party, we all took our seats, my Mother on the Viceroy's right, myself next, and the others in the order of their rank, the chairs on the left being occupied

by the members of the staff. We were all greatly delighted at the courteous and affable manner in which Lord Northbrook entertained us. He talked to my Mother for nearly ten minutes, making many inquiries about Bhopál and our journey to Calcutta. We were then conducted by the two Secretaries and the Political Agent to another chamber, and ushered into the presence of the Prince of Wales. As we entered, His Royal Highness rose from his chair and bowed to us with princely dignity. He then shook hands with my Mother, and expressed a hope that she had recovered from the fatigues of her journey; then, extending his right hand to her, and his left to me, he led us to our seats. After conversing for some minutes with Her Highness the Prince turned to me, and said, with great good-humour, "You and I are in similar positions, for you are the Crown-Princess of the State of Bhopál, and I am the Crown-Prince of England." When I recall these words I cannot but regard it as a strange coincidence that the death of Her Majesty Queen Victoria took place in the same year as that of my own Mother, and that His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales became the ruler of the British Empire in the same year that I became the Begam of Bhopál. The visit was brought to a conclusion by the distribution of *'itr* and *pán*.

On December 29th, His Royal Highness honoured us by returning our visit. He was met by Sidik Hasan Khán at the house of the Mahárája of Gwálior, and conducted thence to our residence.

The Prince talked with my Mother in a most friendly manner, and clearly manifested his royal favour. At the close of the visit, the following gifts were exchanged:

From His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales to Her Highness Nawáb Shah Jahán Begam:

A gold medal bearing the image of His Royal Highness.
A diamond ring.
A portrait of Her Majesty Queen Victoria.
A gold chain.
A portrait of H.R.H. the Princess of Wales.
A portrait of His Royal Highness.
A gold seal.

From Her Highness Nawáb Shah Jahán Begam to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales:

A gun of Bhopál manufacture.
An Indian scimitar.
A shield.
Two caps embroidered with gold thread.
A perfume box of silver filigree work.
A pair of Indian bracelets.
A pair of gold earrings.
A kerchief embroidered by Her Highness.
A copy of *The History of Bhopál*.
A book containing a description of Mecca, written by Nawáb Sikandar Begam.

Owing to my indisposition I was unable to be present at this interview. I made the attempt, but was too weak even to reach the stairs which led to the reception-room. I was therefore obliged to remain in a lower apartment, where the members of the Prince's staff came to see me.

On January 1st, the Chapter of the Order of the Star of India took place. The spot selected for the assembly was the lawn in front of Government House, where arrangements had been made on a large and magnificent scale. A place was assigned to each member according to the number of his Star. Nawáb Shah Jahán Begam, clad in a *burkha*, occupied the place immediately on the left of His Royal Highness, and next to her came the other Knights, in the order of their creation. His Royal Highness then invested the various Chiefs and European gentlemen with the titles and orders that had been conferred upon them.

The birth of my daughter Sáhibzádi Bilkis Jahán Begam had left me in such a weak state that I ought never to have undertaken the journey to Calcutta. I went in obedience to my Mother's will, and it was only the thought that I was to see the heir-apparent to the throne of England that gave me the strength to bear the sufferings which my obedience entailed. I did indeed have the honour of visiting His Royal Highness, but, after that, I was too ill to take part in anything. Even this royal Chapter I was unable to see – a misfortune which I shall never cease to regret. After the Chapter, several other social functions took place, the most important of which was the visit paid by my Mother to the Viceroy and Lady Northbrook, and a visit paid by Their Excellencies in return. On the 18th of Zil Hijjah, we set out from Calcutta on our return journey. Our departure was private, and no official formalities took place. We halted at Benáres, where we

visited the Maháràja and the Maháráni of Vizianágram, and again at Cawnpore.

During this visit to Calcutta, Nawáb Sidik Hasan Khán tried his best to get himself made *mukhtar*, or regent of the State. The question of my Mother remaining *purdah* had been raised solely with this end in view. It was, however, like all his other plans, unavailing; for even had he been able to show that, by remaining *purdah*, my Mother was seriously hampered in the work of administration, he would have still required the consent of the heir-apparent before he, or any one else, could be appointed regent.

Before proceeding to an account of the Imperial Durbar at Delhi, which forms the subject of the next chapter, I will briefly narrate the circumstances connected with the births of two elder children.

My daughter Bilkis Jahán Begam was born at 1.37 a.m. on the 24th day of Ramazán-ul-mubárak, 1292 A.H. (October 25th, 1875). In honour of the event, five convicts were, according to the custom of the State, liberated from gaol, and money and corn were distributed amongst the poor. Early in the morning the newly born child received the salutations of all who were assembled at the Shaukat Mahal, after which it was taken to the mosque of Máji Sáhiba to be blessed. The *akika* ceremony was performed at 9 o'clock on the morning of the seventh day (30th of Ramazán-ul-mubárak), and the Sáhibzádi was named Muzaffar Begam, the letters of which denote the date of her birth. On this day the nobles and chief officers of the State broke their fast at my palace.

When the Sáhibzádi was forty days old, Nawáb Shah Jahán Begam desired to perform the *chatti* ceremony. But Nawáb Sidik Hasan Khán, who was learned in such matters, was opposed to its performance, telling my mother that such ceremonies were not sanctioned by the Muhammadan religion. My mother allowed herself to be guided by his advice, but she showed her affection for me by sending *jora* to my house (the Hamid Manzil), and by coming there herself and presenting my husband and myself with robes of honour, which she placed upon us with her own hands. Instead of the usual presents given on such occasions, the midwife received a sum of two thousand rupees, and ornaments worth another thousand. A monthly sum of Rs. 250 was sanctioned for the Sáhibzádi's maintenance from the day of her birth. Nawáb Shah Jahán Begam dispatched *kharítas* to the Agent to the Governor-General and the Political Agent, who sent congratulatory letters in reply.

My second child, Nawáb Muhammad Nasrullah Khán, was born at 3 o'clock on the morning of the 17th day of the month Zil Kádah, 1293 A.H. (December 3rd, 1876). The news was received with great joy by all classes of the population. Perhaps no one was more genuinely delighted than Nawáb Kudsia Begam, for, after four generations, a male child was born in the family of which she was then the oldest and the most distinguished member. It is almost a law of nature that the birth of a son gives more joy to a mother's heart, and is regarded by the other members of the family as a more auspicious event, than the birth of a daughter, and

such feelings would naturally be intensified in the case of a family to which for a period of seventy-six years God had vouchsafed no male representative. The Kudsia Begam shared most heartily in the general rejoicings. According to custom, her retainers showed their happiness by firing off guns around her palace, and she accepted these and all other congratulatory demonstrations with great good-humour and kindness, distributing money and sweetmeats with her usual liberality. But the happiness which prevailed about her was not to be unclouded; and in the midst of the merry-making a peremptory order was received to the effect that all firing of guns was to cease, and this order was worded in a manner so offensive that it not only wounded the feelings of the Kudsia Begam in a most cruel manner, but did much to perpetuate and intensify the estrangement which already existed between her and my Mother.

One of the chief causes of this estrangement was my Mother's remarriage. This was an act contrary to the customs of the Afghán race, and the offence was aggravated by the fact that she had chosen to marry a man of an alien family. As a matter of fact, second marriages and the re-marriage of widows are contrary neither to Muhammadan custom nor to the Muhammadan religion. For a considerable number of years, however, the Muhammadans of India had rigidly adhered to the custom of the Afgháns, and this had now taken such a hold on society that any breach of it was regarded as a heinous sin. This feeling was shared by men and women alike; even

those whose ideas had been modified by Western education never permitted second marriages in their own families, and up to the present day the practice is viewed with disfavour by nearly all Muhammadans of Afghán descent. It was only natural, therefore, that the Kudsia Begam should support the traditions of her family and race. But this I can say with certainty, that, however strong her prejudices may have been, she would never have allowed them to become the cause of family dissensions, or to destroy her affection for her own flesh and blood. What offended her in my Mother's case was not so much the unlawfulness of the act itself, but the fact that the husband was a man of alien race, and qualified neither by rank, position, nor character to be the consort of the ruler of a State. She never publicly gave vent to her displeasure, but she was of too frank a nature to be able to disguise altogether her feelings towards Sidik Hasan Khán. He, too, knew the light in which he was regarded, and, instead of trying to gain her good-will by conducting himself with tact and courtesy, cherished resentment against her in his heart, and deliberately set himself to foment the family feud.

In carrying out these designs, he kept another purpose constantly before himself, and that was to trouble me and my family in every way that lay in his power, and in both his plans he was only too successful. Both I and my children were forbidden to enjoy the privilege of the Kudsia Begam's society and friendship. How painful this was to me only those can understand who are accustomed to look

to their elders for affection and love, and to regard their friendship as one of the most precious things in the world. This treatment was the more hard to bear since it was altogether void of reason, and since we endured it at the hands of a stranger who never scrupled to sacrifice the happiness of others in order to compass his private ends. This was not the only injury I suffered. At the time of my marriage, the Kudsia Begam spent two and a half lákhs of rupees on jewellery and various household articles, which she intended as a marriage present for me. Many times she begged me to accept her gift, but my Mother, acting solely under the influence of Sidik Hasan Khán, would not permit me to do so. Her benevolent designs being thus frustrated, she resolved to wait for my *pirchath* ceremony, and to make her presentation to me on that occasion; but she only met with a similar disappointment. Until the day of her death she was the victim of schemes of this description, and then did Sidik Hasan Khán secure the prize which had formed the object of all his previous designs; for practically the whole of her property fell into his hands, a nominal share only finding its way into the State treasury.

But to return to the birth of my son. I received congratulatory letters from Colonel Kincaid, Political Agent, the Agent to the Governor-General, and many other English gentlemen. Colonel Osborne, formerly Political Agent, who had been specially intimate with my family, wrote to me from London telling me of the pleasure which the news had given him, and congratulating me in

the most hearty manner. My Mother sanctioned a monthly allowance of Rs. 250 for the maintenance of my new-born son, as well as a lump sum of Rs. 3,000 to defray the cost of the birthday and *akíka*[1] ceremonies.

The *akíka* ceremony took place on the seventh day, and my Mother named the child Muhammad Nasrullah Khán. On the same day, according to custom, *jora* and other gifts were distributed at my expense amongst the retainers and servants of my household. On this occasion another event took place to mar our joy. My people were giving expression to their happiness in the usual manner by firing off guns, when the head *chobdár* made his appearance, and, approaching Nawab Ihtishám-ul-mulk, said, in the presence of all who were gathered there, "An order has been given that these people are to disperse at once." The feelings of resentment which this order, and the manner of its delivery, aroused in us can easily be imagined. The Nawáb Sáhib, however, exercised his usual self-control, and merely said, "Very well; as soon as these people have received their presents they shall go away." But the matter did not end here. No sooner had the *chobdár* gone away, than he reappeared accompanied by the Subhadár commanding the Body-Guard, who said, in a loud and peremptory voice, "Dismiss these people instantly."

[1] This is "a custom observed by the Arabs on the birth of a child: namely, leaving the hair on the infant's head until the seventh day, when it is shaved, and animals are sacrificed—namely, two sheep for a boy and one for a girl. It is enjoined by Muhammadan law, and observed in all parts of Islam" (Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*). It is usual to name the child on this day.

There was nothing for it but to comply; and the Nawáb Sáhib reluctantly requested all who were present to depart, and at once sent a report of the whole affair to the Begam, the only result of which was that he himself was severely reprimanded. However distasteful the doings at my palace may have been to my Mother, she would never, of her own accord, have issued such an order. All her acts at this time were controlled by the specious arguments of her husband, and, not unfrequently, orders were issued in her name and carried into effect before she had so much as heard of them.

CHAPTER VII

THE IMPERIAL DURBAR AT DELHI

IN 1876, the newspapers announced that, on January 1st of the following year, a royal durbar would be held at Delhi, at which Her Majesty the Queen was to be proclaimed Empress of India. On October 13th, 1876 (24th of Ramazán, 1293 A.H.), a communication arrived from the Political Agent enclosing a formal invitation to the durbar. The invitation was, of course, accepted, and extensive preparations for the journey and the camp at Delhi were made. Her Highness's retinue was divided into three detachments, two of which consisted of the troops and camp equipment, and the third, which was the last to leave, of Her Highness's attendants and personal baggage. My own arrangements I had to commence two days after the birth of Nawáb Nasrullah Khán. My European friends, as well as many of my relations, were altogether opposed to my going. But Sidik Hasan Khán had made up his mind that I should not be left behind, and he was, as usual, supported by my Mother. The reason of this determination was plain enough to me. Sidik Hasan Khán feared that, in the absence of my Mother, my

former intimacy with the Kudsia Begam would be renewed, and all that he hoped to achieve by keeping us apart from each other might be lost.

In spite of my weakness, I obeyed my Mother's instructions, as indeed it was my duty to do, and set about preparing for my departure. We set out at 7 o'clock on the morning of the 27th Zil Kádah, 1293 A.H., the caravan consisting of Her Highness, myself, Sidik Hasan Khán, Nawáb Ihtishám-ul-mulk, and various nobles and state officials, numbering in all one hundred and sixty-three people. Hoshangábád was reached on the 30th of Zil Kádah, 1293 A.H. (December 17th, 1876 A.D.). We were met here by the officer commanding the Hoshangábád detachment with a guard of honour, besides several European officials. We left Hoshangábád the same day and reached Itársi in the evening. Here we were joined by the Political Agent, who had gone on in advance, and we embarked on the special train which was to convey us to Delhi. We had to stop at Jabbalpúr, Allahábád, and Aligarh, as, owing to my indisposition, special food had to be prepared for me at these stations. At 11 o'clock in the morning, we arrived at Delhi. A company of British soldiers formed a guard of honour, and presented arms as we alighted from the train. The Commissioner of Delhi and two Secretaries welcomed us on behalf of His Excellency the Viceroy, and various other European gentlemen were present on the platform.

As soon as Her Highness entered the camp, a salute of nineteen guns was fired. Since cholera

was prevalent at this time, the Government had passed an order limiting the retinues of the Chiefs attending the durbar, the number of persons to accompany each Chief being fixed according to his rank. My Mother's retinue consisted of five hundred people, and the Bhopál camp was arranged to accommodate this number. The spot selected was near the village of Azádpúr, a healthy situation, and one that commanded a fine prospect. At 7.30 a.m. on Friday, 5th Zil Hijjah, Colonel William Kincaid, the Political Agent, called upon Her Highness to discuss the share which Bhopál should take in welcoming His Excellency the Viceroy on his arrival at Delhi, and on the following day Sidik Hasan Khán visited Sir Henry Daly, Agent to the Governor-General for Central India, to consult with him concerning the arrangements to be made for the reception of His Excellency at Her Highness's camp. Lord Lytton arrived in Delhi on the morning of the 7th, and the Chiefs assembled at the railway station to receive him. His Excellency, fearing that my Mother would be inconvenienced by so large a concourse of people, had excused her from being present at the railway station, and Bhopál was, therefore, represented by Sirdars of the State and a detachment of the State troops. The following day, His Excellency sent his Secretary to make inquiries after my Mother's health and welfare, and similar messages were received from the Rája of Nabha and the Rája of Samthar. Later on in the day, my Mother dispatched a messenger to the Nabha Camp to inquire after the health of the Rája.

In the evening, intelligence was received from the Political Agent that the Viceroy would receive Her Highness on December 27th, and that she was to be accompanied by not more than eight Sirdars; a programme of the procedure to be observed at this interview was also sent, together with eight tickets, on which the names, rank, and designation of the Sirdars accompanying Her Highness were to be written in English. All the arrangements for the visit were duly completed, and on the following day, *i.e.* December 27th, 1876, the Political Agent conducted the Begam to the Viceroy's camp, those accompanying her being Nawáb Sidik Hasan Khán, Nawáb Ihtishám-ul-mulk, Muhammad Jamál-ud-dín Khán Sáhib, First Minister of the State, Mián Núr-ul-hasan Khán, Mián Akil Muhammad Khán, Mián Nazír Muhammad Khán, Mián Alamgír Muhammad Khán, and Munshi Syad Abdul Ali Khán, the State Vakíl. I was unable to go owing to my indisposition, which the cold in camp had tended to aggravate. Her Highness was received with the usual salute of nineteen guns. The Chief Secretary, the Under Secretary, and Sir Henry Daly met her at the door of her carriage, and everything took place as arranged in the programme. His Excellency greeted my Mother in English, and asked her about her journey from Bhopál. He then inquired after me and Nawáb Nasrullah Khán, and expressed his surprise that I was able to undertake so trying a journey. "I am very pleased," he said, "that in spite of the very recent birth of your grandchild you have yet

been able to come here and take part in this imperial durbar. I have heard much of your venerable Mother, the Nawáb Sikandar Begam, and of the many and high honours which were bestowed upon her. The history of her travels in Arabia written by herself, a copy of which you were kind enough to send to me, I have read with real pleasure. I, too, belong to a family of authors, and my whole life has been passed amongst men of learning, so I hope you will regard my appreciation of the book as a guarantee of its merits." At this moment the flag which had been sent to my Mother by Her Majesty the Queen was brought, and unfolded near His Excellency's throne. Whereupon, His Excellency descended from his seat, and, leading my Mother up to the flag, explained its high significance, and said, "This flag is a symbol of the friendly relations which exist between the Bhopál State and the English Government. Let it be carried in the state processions of Bhopál from generation to generation." He then presented my Mother with a gold medal, on which was inscribed, in English and Persian, the words "Empress of India." In doing so he said, "It gives me great pleasure to present to you, on behalf of Her Majesty the Queen-Empress, this medal and flag. I trust that you will honour them, and that you and your successors will regard them as tokens of the friendship of the Empress of India towards you, and as mementoes of this imperial durbar, at which Her Majesty the Queen has taken the title, Empress of India. Whenever this flag is unrolled, you will remember, not only that your

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loyal State is joined by the bonds of friendship to the English throne, but that it is the real desire of the Ruler of Great Britain that your family should long continue to be great and prosperous. I have also the pleasure to inform you that the Nawáb Sáhib has been granted a salute of seventeen guns throughout India." After this announcement, he shook hands with the Nawáb Sáhib, and the interview came to an end. The Private Secretary, the Under Secretary, and the Agent to the Governor-General for Central India conducted my Mother and Sidik Hasan Khán to their carriage, and congratulated them upon the honours which they had received. As they left the Viceroy's camp, salutes of nineteen and seventeen guns were fired. On reaching her quarters, Her Highness dispatched a messenger to carry her *saláms* to the Rája of Samthar, and the same evening complimentary messages were received from the Rájas of Gwálior, Datia, and Benáres.

On the afternoon of January 28th, His Excellency the Viceroy paid a return visit to Her Highness. He was met half a mile from the Bhopál camp, and escorted to the entrance, where the Begam, in person, received him as he alighted from his carriage, while a salute of thirty-one guns was fired. The Viceroy was accompanied by the Foreign Secretary, the Military Secretary, the Private Secretary, the Agent to the Governor-General for Central India, the officer commanding the Body-Guard, and other European officers. After the usual greetings, His Excellency took his seat, with the Begam on his right hand, and the

members of his staff, in order of rank, upon his left. On the Begam's left sat the Political Agent, and the Sirdars of the State. After *nazarána* had been presented, the Begam gave His Excellency a copy of *The History of Bhopál*, and also a book entitled *Shams-i-Anjuman*, which had been compiled by her husband, Nawáb Sidik Hasan Khán. His Excellency looked at this book with much interest, and, rising from his seat, shook the Nawáb by the hand, saying, "I thank you for this book." In reply the Nawáb said, "I am highly honoured by your acceptance of this poor gift." His Excellency then inquired if the book contained extracts from the works of the poet Sádi, and on being informed that it did he expressed much pleasure. *'Itr* and *pán*, together with fresh and dried fruits, were then distributed, and Her Highness presented the Viceroy with a fan, inlaid with gold, as an example of Bhopál workmanship, and purses ornamented with gold embroidery and filled with cardamoms were given to each member of the staff. This concluded the interview, and His Excellency and party left, being escorted, as on his arrival, to a distance of half a mile from the camp. On this occasion, the soldiers of the artillery composing the saluting battery received from Her Highness a present of five hundred rupees.

The following day, Nizám-ul-mulk Asif Jah sent Nawáb Imád Jang, with other Nobles, to carry his compliments to Her Highness, and to inquire after her health, and similar greetings were also received from other Chiefs, all of which were suitably acknowledged and returned. Besides the

officers of Central India, many other European ladies and gentlemen visited my Mother, and were all much impressed by the affability and courtesy with which they were received. On the 13th Zil Hijjah, the flag which had been presented by Her Majesty the Queen was brought from the Political Agent's quarters by Ghulám Mahbub Khán, Mohtamim of the *kár-khána* and received with all due honour. The same day Her Highness paid a visit to Her Excellency Lady Lytton, by whom she was most cordially welcomed. His Excellency was also present, and talked with my Mother in a very friendly manner, the Political Agent acting as interpreter. At her departure, His Excellency shook hands with my Mother and with Nawáb Sidik Hasan Khán, and presented each with a copy of one of his own works.

Her Highness also sent through the Political Agent, and the Agent to the Governor-General, copies of *The History of Bhopál* to the Governors of Bombay, and Madras, the Maháraja of Gwálior, the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, the Khán of Khelát, Nawáb Imád Jang, and the Mír Munshi to Sir Sálár Jang. On this day the Political Agent sent twenty-three tickets for the Durbar. Of these, one was for Her Highness; eight were for the following: Nawáb Sidik Hasan Khán, Nawáb Ihtisham-ul-mulk Ali Jah Bahádur, Maulavi Jamál-ud-dín Sáhib Bahádur, the First Minister, Mián Núr-ul-hasan, Mián Alamgír Muhammad Khán, Mián Ali Hasan Khán, Mián Sadar Muhammad Khán, and Syad Abdul Ali, the State Vakíl; and the remaining fourteen were for

various Sirdars, to whom third-class seats had been assigned. Her Highness was assigned a seat close to the Agent to the Governor-General for Central India, and to the Mahárájas of Gwálior and Indore.

January 1st was the ever-memorable day for which all these elaborate and magnificent preparations had been made, in honour of which this great concourse of ruling Princes had assembled, a day which brought joy to every heart in India, and the record of which makes one of the most brilliant pages in her history. At 10 o'clock in the morning, Her Highness went in state to the durbar. She drove in a carriage drawn by four horses, and was escorted by her nobles and retainers and a detachment of the State troops. The assemblage was held in an enormous pavilion situated at the foot of the famous ridge, from which the British forces bombarded Delhi during the Mutiny. The seats of the ruling Chiefs were arranged on a semicircular platform, painted white and gold, and facing the Viceregal Throne. Indian nobles, who were not ruling Chiefs, and government officials, were accommodated in rows behind the Throne, and in the very centre of the pavilion was displayed the royal Crown, surrounded by the flags of all the Feudatory States of India. The platform for the accommodation of the Chiefs was divided into thirty-six blocks, and to the block of each Chief was affixed the flag of his State. The middle of the semicircle was occupied by His Highness the Nizám, and the Mahárájas of Mysore and Baroda, the Chiefs of Rájputána being on their right, and those of Central India on their

left. The Chiefs of the Punjab occupied the extreme right of the crescent, and the lesser Chiefs the extreme left. The Governors of Madras and Bombay, the Lieutenant-Governors of the Punjab, Bengal, and the North-West Provinces, and the Commander-in-Chief in India were also seated on this platform. Each of these was attended by his staff, and each Chief by the nobles of his State; and, as the durbar filled, the handsome and many-coloured uniforms of the West, mingling with the barbaric splendour of the East, formed a spectacle as unique as it was brilliant. All the troops assembled at Delhi were drawn up on either side of the pavilion, the European portion on the north side, and the Indian portion on the south.

His Excellency Lord Lytton arrived at noon, and was received with a royal salute without guns. He was wearing the robes of a Grand Commander of the Star of India, and was accompanied by Lady Lytton and his daughters. Heralds announced his approach with a flourish of trumpets, and massed bands played the National Anthem. Having taken his seat on the Viceregal throne, His Excellency commanded the Chief Herald to read the proclamation "of the assumption of the Imperial title by Her Majesty the Queen." This having been done, a translation of the same in Urdu was read by the Foreign Secretary, after which the Royal Standard was hoisted, a salute of a hundred-and-one salvos of artillery and a *feu-de-joie* were fired, and the bands again played the National Anthem. His Excellency the Viceroy

and Governor-General then rose and addressed the assembly. The speech which he delivered, worthy in every way of the greatness of the occasion, does not need to be reproduced here. It forms, together with the Proclamation and Her Majesty's gracious message to her Indian subjects, a permanent part of the history of the Empire, and there must be few amongst my readers to whom it is not familiar. When the Viceroy and Governor-General had concluded his address, the assembly spontaneously rose and joined the troops in giving repeated cheers; His Highness the Mahárája Sindhia, His Highness the Mahárája of Jaipúr, on behalf of the Chiefs of Rajputána, His Excellency Sir Sálár Jang, on behalf of His Highness the Nizám, Her Highness the Begam of Bhopál, His Highness the Mahárája of Cashmere, and other Chiefs, also rose and gave expression to sentiments of loyalty and congratulation; massed bands played the National Anthem, and at His Excellency's command the Assembly was dissolved.

The same evening a state banquet took place, at which His Excellency proposed, for the first time, the toast of the Queen-Empress. Nawáb Sidik Hasan Khán represented my Mother on this night, and His Excellency requested him to inform Her Highness that he had already cabled her congratulations, with those of the other Chiefs, to Her Imperial Majesty in London.

On the day after the durbar, Her Highness called upon Lady Lytton at the Viceregal camp. The visit was returned the following day, Her Excellency being accompanied by the Viceroy's

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Secretary and the Political Agent. Nawáb Ihtishám-ul-mulk and the First Minister escorted Her Excellency to the Bhopál camp, at the entrance to which she was received by Nawáb Sidik Hasan Khán, a detachment of the State Lancers forming a guard of honour. As mementoes of this visit, Lady Lytton gave my Mother a ring set with diamonds, and photographs of herself and Lord Lytton. My Mother's gifts to Her Excellency consisted of a fan, a pair of jewelled earrings, and a jewelled necklace. The next day, when my Mother was paying her farewell visit, His Excellency, on behalf of the Queen, presented her with a sword and belt,[1] and sent to me and to Nawáb Ihtishám-ul-mulk silver medals which had been struck in memory of the durbar. On January 5th, Her Highness visited the Nizám. She was received by Sir Sálár Jang, and, after a brief meeting with His Highness, entered the Zenana and saw the Begams. The return visit took place on January 6th, and, after the distribution of *'itr* and *pán*, the Nizám, who was at that time very young, was taken into the Zenana tents, while Sir Sálár Jang was entertained by Nawáb Sidik Hasan Khán.

During our stay at Delhi I had suffered much on account of the cold, and so, at the close of the durbar, Her Highness decided, for the sake of my health, to leave our camp at Azádpúr, and seek accommodation in the city. Two houses were accordingly engaged, and we moved into

[1] This sword was afterwards presented to Sahibzada Colonel Obaidullah Khán, on his assuming command of the Forces of the State.

them on January 7th. Before our departure we visited the Fort, the tomb of Humayun, and many other places of historic interest, and pilgrimages were made to the tombs of Hasrat Kutub-ud-dín Bakhtiyar Khâki, and Sheik Nizám-ud-dín Ahmad Baiauni, as well as to other sacred spots. Many of the European residents of Delhi called upon us, and we spent a considerable time making purchases in the shops of the city. We left Delhi on January 22nd, our party being divided into three detachments as on our outward journey. A halt of a few days was made at Agra. We were received on our arrival by a guard of honour and a salute, and we took up our quarters at the house of Sait Lakshmi Chand. As at Delhi, we visited the chief buildings and shops, and Her Highness subscribed Rs. 500 towards the repairs of one of the city mosques. Whilst we were in Agra, presents amounting to Rs. 6000 were distributed amongst our retainers and servants, and Sait Lakshmi Chand, who had shown us great politeness and attention, was presented with a *khilát*. We left Agra on the 14th of Muharram, and, travelling *viâ* Cawnpore, reached Bhopál in five days.

CHAPTER VIII

AN ENTERTAINMENT—A REGRETTABLE DURBAR—BIRTH OF SAHIBZADA OBAIDULLAH KHAN—SOME CEREMONIES.

It had been Her Highness's intention to entertain her European friends at a banquet during her visit to Delhi. But, so numerous were the engagements during the durbar week, that the project had to be abandoned, and Her Highness determined to invite them to Bhopál instead. Orders were, therefore, sent to Bhopál that arrangements should be made without delay for the accommodation of the guests, as well as for their conveyance by road from Itársi; and, by the time Her Highness had returned from Delhi, the invitations had been sent out, and the preparations were well advanced. On February 21st, the Political Agent came to inspect the arrangements, and on the following day the visitors began to arrive. Sir Henry Daly, Agent to the Governor-General, reached Bhopál on the 25th. He was met at the Lál Gáthi by Nawáb Sidik Hasan Khán, with the chief nobles of the State, and a guard of honour from the State army, and a salute of seventeen guns was fired as he entered the city. In the evening, Her Highness

held a durbar in her city palace, at which she formally bade her guests welcome.

The next morning, Nawáb Sidik Hasan Khán paid a visit to Sir Henry Daly, who, in the course of conversation, urged the necessity of introducing vaccination into the State, and recommended that arrangements for doing so should be entrusted to Munshi Ragab Ali Khán. Her Highness cordially welcomed the suggestion, and the appointment of Ragab Ali Khán was at once sanctioned. Members of Her Highness's family had always been vaccinated by a European doctor, but as soon as I heard of the new arrangement that had been made, I asked permission to have my eldest son Nawáb Nasrullah Khán vaccinated, for I thought that his example would do much to encourage others, and to dispel the fear which the new remedy was likely to inspire among the ignorant classes. At 4 o'clock the same afternoon, Sir Henry Daly, accompanied by all the European guests, went to Shahjahánábád and laid the foundation of the Kaisar Gang, which Her Highness had decided to build in commemoration of the Imperial Proclamation. Both Her Majesty the Queen and the Viceroy were informed of this event, and signified to Her Highness the gratification which the intelligence gave them.

In the evening, a banquet took place in the Jahángírábád Kothi. On this occasion, both English and Indian dishes were served, and many of the latter were greatly appreciated. At the conclusion of the repast, the toast of the Queen-Empress was drunk, and speeches were made by Her Highness and Sir Henry Daly. The principal

event of the next day was a military review, in which both the Imperial Service troops and the State army took part. Every one praised the precision with which the various evolutions were executed, and the uniform of the troops and the horses of the cavalry were generally admired. In the afternoon, the mint, the gaol, and the hospital were visited, and at night the guests were entertained at dinner by Nawáb Sidik Hasan Khán. The Nawáb Sáhib himself proposed the royal toast, and Colonel Kincaid, the Political Agent, proposed the health of the Nawáb Sáhib. Sir Henry Daly then made a short speech, in which he congratulated Sidik Hasan Khán on having received the honour of a salute, and spoke of the friendship which the Queen-Empress always displayed towards the Bhopál State. He concluded by praising the administration of the Begam, making particular reference to the help she was giving towards the construction of the railway from Itársi, and the bridge over the Narbadda at Hoshangabád. The Nawáb Sáhib briefly responded, and after *'itr* and *pán* had been distributed, and each guest had received a present of a *battua*,[1] the party broke up.

The next day was occupied in visiting the Fatehgarh Fort, the Old Fort, the High School, and the press. In the afternoon, the Bhopál troops gave an assault-at-arms, and in the evening in spite of a gale of wind, a grand display of fireworks took place in the Nishát Afzah garden,

[1] A *battua* is a small bag made of embroidered silk, and used to hold betel, cardamoms, or tobacco.

at the conclusion of which *'itr* and *pán* were again distributed, and each lady was presented with a handkerchief of Bhopál manufacture. Sir Henry Daly left the next morning, and the remaining guests the day after. Previous to their departure they paid a farewell visit to the Begam at the Shaukat Mahal, when Her Highness presented each of them with her photograph and *The History of Bhopál*, every copy of which bore her own signature.

It was not long after these festivities, that a very regrettable event took place. My readers have been told how Sidik Hasan Khán came to Bhopál an ordinary individual, possessing neither rank nor fame, and how by the help of fortune, he gradually rose to a position equal in importance and dignity to that of a ruler of a state. The Government of India, ever mindful of the ancient and unbroken loyalty of the Bhopál State, and ever ready to treat its rulers with consideration, conferred on Sidik Hasan Khán, at the earnest entreaty of Nawáb Shah Jahán Begam, the same titles and distinctions and the same salute as had previously been granted to Nawáb Umrao Dula. In the reign of Nawáb Sikandar Begam, it had been enacted by the Government of India that the husband of the ruler of Bhopál should be allowed no share in the administration of the State. This enactment Sidik Hasan Khán systematically ignored. For some time, the political officers at Indore and Bhopál, desirous of deferring as far as possible to the wishes of my Mother, overlooked this conduct, until at last his interference

passed all reasonable limits. After the entertainment described above, his behaviour grew worse and worse, and he committed such acts as would assuredly have brought about the interference of the political officers, had it not been for the well-known loyalty of Nawáb Shah Jahán Begam. So great, however, was Sidik Hasan Khán's influence over her, that she became absolutely blind to his intriguing nature. She would oppose him in nothing, and would never hear a word breathed against his character. That he possessed learning and ability is beyond question; but he abused both. His lot fell to him in a fair ground, but neither to the State nor to the British Government did he manifest the smallest signs of gratitude. His disloyalty to the State found vent in an attempt to vilify the government and blacken the reputation of Nawáb Sikandar Begam, the wisdom of whose administration has been, and continues to be, eulogized by statesmen and politicians of the highest rank. The attack which he made on the fair name of this ruler was so gross and unwarranted that it outraged the feelings of every one who possessed any sense of decency or justice.

The occasion selected by Sidik Hasan Khán for the promulgation of this slander was a large durbar held, apparently, with no other object but his own glorification. It was attended by all the leading nobles and officials of the State, and the proceedings opened with a proclamation, in the course of which the administration of the late Begam was subjected to the most offensive criticism, her reign being described as a period of

barbarism and oppression. With the exception of his own adherents, all who were present were disgusted at the tone of the proclamation, and took no pains to conceal their contempt for its originator. It was followed by a speech from the Nawáb Sáhib himself, of such prodigious length that to give even a summary of it would tax a far better memory than mine. But there were some passages in it which, by reason of their very malignancy, I can never forget. In attempting to draw a comparison between the present reign and the past, he stigmatized the Sikandar Begam as a despot, and described the whole State as groaning under the tyranny and injustice of her rule. My Mother he praised in the most extravagant terms. She was the most enlightened, generous, and capable administrator of her day, and her reign was the reign of peace, justice, and mercy. Then, as though he were a magistrate addressing an unlawful assembly, he warned his audience not to mistake clemency for weakness. He was well aware, he said, that a number of evilly disposed persons were attempting to make mischief and to stir up sedition in the State. Amongst others he mentioned Latíf Muhammad Khán and Majíd Muhammad Khán, the two sons of Nawáb Umrao Dula, who, he stated, were well known to be in the habit of paying secret visits to Nawáb Ihtishám-ul-mulk, and, by working on his inexperience with evil advice, were endeavouring to form a party hostile to the Begam and to the State. But by the Grace of God—and his own prowess—their base designs would soon be frustrated. Much more

followed in the same strain, and he eventually brought his harangue to an end with an outburst of self-glorification, and a fulsome expression of his gratitude and devotion to the Begam and the British Ráj.

Although the charges brought against my husband and the sons of Nawáb Umrao Dula were without a particle of foundation, it may well be imagined that such words, spoken as they were at a public durbar, and by one who was to all intents and purposes a stranger to the State, inflicted on me, and many others, wounds which time will not easily heal. Out of regard for Nawáb Shah Jahán Begam, we refrained from giving expression to our feelings, and heard both the proclamation and speech in silence. In this durbar, Sidik Hasan Khán attempted to imitate the proceedings at the Imperial Assemblage at Delhi, he himself being the "Viceroy" of the occasion; and he evidently thought that he could best show his appreciation of the honours that had been heaped upon him by heaping insults upon other people.

By this magnificent display of his greatness, as well as by the proclamation and his own speech, in both of which his services to the State, his titles, and his honours were elaborately set forth, he thought to win the respect and admiration of the whole population. But true respect is not to be gained by self-praise and intimidation, and any claims to admiration which Sidik Hasan Khán may have possessed were far from being strengthened by this ill-judged and unseemly proceeding. The proclamation read in this durbar was in the name

of Nawáb Shah Jahán Begam, but it would be altogether unjust to hold her responsible for it. Those who act under compulsion merit pity and sympathy rather than condemnation. That my Mother acted under compulsion I have no doubt, and I believe that no one who knew her will think otherwise, or lay the events of that unhappy day to her charge.

On the 7th day of the month Zil Kádah (November 30th), the birth of my second son, Sáhibzáda Muhammad Obaidullah Khán, took place, and was the cause of general rejoicing. The customary demonstrations of joy, however, did not take place. My readers will remember the unfortunate circumstances attending the celebration of the birth of my eldest son. I was determined to take every precaution against the repetition of such an experience; and, except that I distributed presents to the various members of my household, no festivities were held. On the third day, my Mother came to see her grandson, and sanctioned for him an allowance of Rs. 250 a month, besides defraying the cost of his birthday and *akíka* ceremonies.

It was about this time, that another event occurred which aggravated, to a considerable extent, my Mother's displeasure with me. This was the marriage of Mián Alamgír Muhammad Khán. It was my Mother's desire that a marriage should take place between the daughter of this person and my eldest son, and my consent to the proposal was asked. I knew that to refuse was to provoke my Mother's wrath, so I avoided giving a direct reply, which, indeed, was not difficult, seeing that Alamgír

Muhammad Khán was only just married, and did not at present possess a daughter. Time went on, and I was beginning to hope that the matter had been forgotten, when, unfortunately, a daughter appeared. The proposal was at once renewed, and Sidik Hasan Khán did his utmost to further it. He was well aware of Her Highness's attachment to Alamgír Muhammad Khán. He also knew that I should object to the match on account of his not being of noble birth on his mother's side, and that my refusal would greatly inflame the Begam's anger against me. The subject was continually talked about, and my Mother constantly sent her female attendants to me in the hope that they might elicit my views about it. I, however, maintained a rigid silence, and, even had I approved the proposal, nothing definite could possibly have been settled, as my son was barely two years old, and the girl only just born. At last, my Mother, unable to comprehend what my silence signified, asked me, point-blank, whether I consented to the proposed marriage or not. I told her, plainly, that I did not. She was extremely displeased, and said, "What! Are you unwilling that your son should be allied to the family of Wazír Muhammad Khán?" I replied that, had that family been noble on both sides, then neither in the case of my marriage, nor her own, would it have been necessary for Nawáb Sikandar Begam to search for husbands outside the circle of her own relatives; and I added that I looked to her to exercise no less circumspection in arranging the marriages of her grandchildren than had been used in her case and mine.

Shortly after this, the daughter of Alamgír Muhammad Khán died, and her mother also; and all possibility of an alliance between our families was at an end. But my answer had made my Mother extremely angry, and it long remained one of the chief causes of her ill-will towards me.

On Tuesday, 25th Shábán, 1297 A.H. (August 3rd, 1880 A.D.), at 8 o'clock in the morning, my youngest daughter, Asif Jahán Begam, was born. My Mother honoured us with her presence at the *akíka* ceremony, and I distributed *joṛa* and other gifts to my dependents and servants. At this time, I was in a very bad state of health. I had fallen ill before the birth of my daughter, and, after that event, my sickness increased to an alarming extent. I was placed under the treatment of Hakím Muazzad-dín. The whole city became alarmed, prayers for my recovery were offered up in all the mosques, the Holy Koran was read through from beginning to end, and the prayer that God "would keep the light of Bhopál kindled" was on every lip.

Nawáb Kudsia Begam, being in disfavour with my Mother, was at first diffident about visiting me. But her anxiety became more than she could bear, and, during the latter part of my illness, she came two or three times in every week to see me. I had always been a favourite with her, and she was much distressed on account of my illness, and distributed lákhs of rupees in charity for my restoration to health. At length, after three long months, I was pronounced convalescent. I took the "bath of recovery," and was invested by my Mother with the "robe of health."

My recovery was the signal for general rejoicings and thanksgivings. The joy of the Kudsia Begam was beyond description; and the benevolence and liberality she displayed on this occasion will long be remembered. To me she sent a "robe of health" and a lákh of rupees in cash, while to each of my children she presented a like sum of money, as well as to my Mother and Sidik Hasan Khán. The latter, however, caused the whole amount to be returned, with a message to the following effect: "Her Highness desires me to state that, as you are displeased with her, she is unable to accept your money, and, as she cannot accept it, neither is it fitting that her children should do so." That a quarrel existed is true, but this was not the reason why the money was returned, a transaction with which my Mother probably had little or nothing to do. Sidik Hasan Khán was, in reality, furthering a plan of his own, which only became apparent after the Kudsia Begam's death. And when that sad event took place, this large sum went to swell the amount which, as I have already narrated, found its way into Sidik Hasan Khán's pocket. The property which the Kudsia Begam left was neither inspected by my Mother, nor was any correct valuation of it ever made. There was a considerable sum in cash, and this was invested in railway shares, but of the rest only a very small portion was ever accounted for.

When my eldest daughter reached her fourth year, Nawáb Shah Jahán Begam took entire charge of her. At the *akíka* ceremony, a grant of Rs. 250 a month had been made to defray the cost

of her upbringing. From this allowance, however, only the pay of the Sáhibzádi's personal servants was taken. The remainder was allowed to accumulate in my *deorhi*, all other expenses being borne by my Mother. Until her sixth year, my daughter's ceremonies were performed in the ordinary fashion. But, in the beginning of her seventh year, the *nashra súra bakr* was celebrated on an unusually large scale. The *nashra súra bakr* is usually preceded by the ceremony of *bismillah*,[1] and this custom had been followed in my own case, as well as in the case of my sister, Nawáb Sulaiman Jahán Begam. Unhappily, this sister died only a month after the *bismillah* had taken place; and this sad event was so fresh in my Mother's mind, and the performance of the ceremony would have recalled so many painful thoughts to her, that she determined to omit it in the present instance, and to prepare for the *nashra súra bakr* instead.

The celebration took place on the first day of Muharram, 1299 A.H. All the relatives of the family and the nobles of the State were presented with

[1] Properly speaking, the *bismillah* ceremony should take place when the child is four years, four months, and four days old. It consists in teaching the child to recite the inscription which is found at the commencement of the Korán, *bismil-láhir-rahmán-nir-rahim*, "In the name of God the Merciful, the Gracious." After this ceremony, the child is sent to school and taught the alphabet, and to recite certain passages from the Korán. In all there are seven important ceremonies for children. The birthday ceremony, which takes place on the day of birth; the naming ceremony and the *akika* ceremony, which take place on the seventh day; the purification of the mother on the fortieth day; the *bismillah*; circumcision, usually in the seventh year; and the ceremony which takes place when the child has completed the reading of the Korán.

jora, and the Ministers and other State officers were entertained at a banquet. The relatives of the family also presented *jora* to my daughter, and all these *jora* were carried in procession to the Táj Mahal palace. My Mother, at this time, lived in the city, but, as a procession was a necessary part of the function, it was decided that it should take place at the Táj Mahal, as the route thither lay through the main thoroughfares of the city. On this festive occasion, Her Highness presented *khiláts* to my husband and myself, and to all the members of the families of the Wazír Khail, the Báki Khail, and the Jalál Khail.[1] I received my *khilát* in the *zenána*, my Mother robing me in it with her own hands, while my husband, who was unable to enter this portion of the palace, as many *purdah* ladies were present, received his in the reception-room of the *mardána* from the hands of Sidik Hasan Khan. I never saw my Mother in better spirits than at this time. For a whole month, festivities were kept up, and every day her liberality and good-humour seemed to increase.

In the families of ruling Chiefs, the beginning of a child's education is usually marked by the presentation of a *jágír*, or by an increase in his or her monthly allowance; and, accordingly, Sáhibzádi Bilkis Jahán Begam was now given a *jágír* worth Rs. 12,000 a year. The *sanad* of this *jágír* was

[1] It is customary amongst Afghans to regard men who become famous in the world as the founders of new families, or Khails, which are named after them. Thus, the Wazír Khail takes its name from Nawáb Wazír Muhammad Khán; the Báki Khail from my father, Nawáb Báki Muhammad Khán; and the Jalál Khail from my husband's ancestor, Salár Mír Muhammad Jalál Khán. An account of all these families is to be found in the *Tárikh-i-Bhopál*.

sent to me, but my Mother continued to keep its management under her own control. The *nashra súra bakr* takes place when a child begins the reading of the Korán, and when the Holy Book is finished the event is marked by another ceremony. My daughter was eleven years old when the latter took place—the reading of the Korán having occupied her four years. During this time, my Mother's attitude towards me had undergone a complete change, and her disfavour was now as apparent as her favour had been before. No greetings were ever exchanged between us, and the doorway that connected her palace with mine was never opened. The news that my daughter's second *nashra* was to be celebrated, of course, reached my family, but we never had any information of it from my Mother, nor were we invited to take part in it; and I, my husband, and my children remained in our palace as though we had been strangers. Although it was some satisfaction to us to know that Bilkis Jahán Begam still enjoyed Her Highness's favour and affection, yet we felt this public slight very keenly. The celebration took place in the Shaukat Mahal, and a large number of relatives and friends gathered there. In the evening, the doorway between our palaces was opened, and my daughter, gaily dressed and bedecked with jewels, was sent to us. She made her *salám* very prettily to the Nawáb Sáhib and myself, and then, with a due display of respect, presented her *nazar*. We both embraced her warmly, and, almost before we had done so, she was recalled, and the doorway was again closed.

THE MOTI MAHAL

THE SHAUKAT MAHAL

CHAPTER IX

DEATH OF THE KUDSIA BEGAM—MINISTERIAL CHANGES—A JOURNEY TO CALCUTTA

On the 24th of Muharram, 1299 A.H. (December 14th, 1881), the death occurred of the Kudsia Begam. This venerable lady was born in the year 1801, the period of her childhood being one of the stormiest in the history of Bhopál. She ruled the State for eighteen years, and then abdicated in favour of her son-in-law, Jahángír Muhammad Khán. She herself retired into private life, and never again took any active part in public affairs. A *jágír* of Rs. 4,98,682 was conferred upon her, the management of which remained in her own hands till the day of her death. After her retirement, the Government of India continued to show her every mark of respect, and she retained all the honours to which her previous position had entitled her. She received a personal salute of fifteen guns, and, after the Delhi Durbar, by the special command of Her Majesty the Queen, she was invested with the order of the Crown of India. The Agent to the Governor-General and the Political Agent visited her whenever they came to Bhopál; and they did so not merely as a mark of respect, but because

they considered it a privilege to converse with a lady of such rare piety and virtue. The Kudsia Begam was renowned for her liberality, kindness of heart, and the simplicity of her life. To the people of Bhopál she was more than a mother, and she won not only their respect, but their gratitude and love. During the period of her seclusion, she witnessed the vicissitudes of no less than three reigns. No changes, however, affected the tranquillity of her life, which would have remained undisturbed to the end had it not been for the malevolence of Sidik Hasan Khán.

I have already referred to the troubles which darkened the last years of her life, and to the estrangement that grew up between herself and my Mother after the latter's second marriage. Perhaps she resented nothing more bitterly than a memorandum which, shortly before her death, was sent to the Agent to the Governor-General, in which it was stated that she had grown too old to administer her *jágir*: that she could no longer control even her own servants, who were guilty of all kinds of mischievous acts: and that it was therefore, meet that her affairs should be brought under the management of the State. It is almost needless to say that the Agent to the Governor-General refused to entertain the proposal. The full story of this and her many other wrongs, which I heard from her own lips, is too long and too sad to be repeated here. The Government of India eventually stepped in, and endeavoured to bring about a reconciliation. Their efforts were so far successful that, in November 1881, a *kharita*

was sent to the Viceroy, informing him that friendship had been restored. It was, however, little more than a formal reconciliation, and grief and affliction followed the Kudsia Begam to her grave. One great consolation she had, which was that God permitted her to live long enough to see two male children amongst her descendants—namely, her two great-great-grandsons, Nawáb Nasrullah Khán and Sáhibzáda Obaidullah Khán.

On the morning after her death, her body was carried, in mournful silence, to a garden[1] outside the city, where she was laid by the side of her husband, in a grave which she herself had had constructed. There was general mourning in the city for three days, all business being suspended, and all courts and offices closed. The sad news was communicated to the Political Agent, and, through him, to the Agent to the Governor-General and to the Viceroy. From each, letters of condolence were received, expressing sorrow for the loss which the State had sustained, and paying a high tribute to the departed Begam's generosity, ability, and loyalty to the British Throne. By the orders of the Political Agent, a day of public mourning was proclaimed at Sehore. All public and private places of business were closed, and the British flag at the Agency flew at half-mast throughout the day.

The Kudsia Begam had not been buried many days when death deprived me of another old and

[1] This garden, which is situated about a quarter of a mile from the city, was made by the Kudsia Begam herself, and is named after Nawáb Nazir Muhammad Khán.

valued friend in the person of Maulavi Muhammad Jamál-ud-dín, First Minister of the State. He died on the 27th of Muharram, 1299 A.H., after a long and honourable career. He entered the service of the State during the regency of the Kudsia Begam. Every year furnished new proofs of his ability and faithfulness, and the period of his ministry was marked by many important reforms. In his latter days, he made the one big mistake of his life in marrying his daughter to a son of Sidik Hasan Khán, and labouring for the latter's promotion. Gratitude was not among the virtues of Sidik Hasan Khán, as Maulavi Jamál-ud-dín found out to his cost; for his last days were embittered, and his life made a burden to him, by the very man whom he had advanced and befriended. The troubles which Sidik Hasan Khan brought on the old Minister were unconnected with public affairs, and there is no need to describe them here. Suffice to say, they were borne with patience and fortitude, and served to bring out more strongly than ever the true nobility of Jamál-ud-dín's character. His loyalty and valuable services to Bhopál will never be forgotten, and his life will remain an example to all future Ministers of the State. His death was followed by disorder in every branch of the administration. A description of the confusion, intrigue, and corruption which prevailed would fill a volume, and would be of very little interest. I shall, therefore, content myself with a brief notice of the Ministers who held office during the period of Sidik Hasan Khán's ascendency.

Maulavi Jamál-ud-dín was succeeded by Maulavi

Muhammad Mobin. This person had been Sidik Hasan Khán's tutor, and secured his appointment through his pupil's influence. But he held office for only a few months, and was succeeded by Háfiz Ahmad Raza Khán, an honest and capable man, who set to work with energy to restore the government to a state of order and efficiency. Before many days, however, clouds began to gather. Sidik Hasan Khán was determined to be the first person in the State, and Háfiz Ahmad Raza Khán was equally determined to have a free hand. Both were strong men, and both obstinate, and each strove to bring about the other's downfall. Peace between such rivals was out of the question. Had their quarrel been confined to themselves no great harm might have resulted. But the behaviour of the Minister gave much trouble and annoyance to my Mother, and was, at times, altogether incompatible with his position as first officer of the State. At last, he aroused her displeasure to such an extent that he was dismissed from his office.

By the orders of the Government of India, Nawáb Abdul Latíf Khán Bahádur, C.I.E., was next appointed Minister, and my Mother was advised to trust, in all important matters, to his guidance. But she was jealous of her prerogatives and dignity, and the idea of ruling under the directions of a native of India was not to her taste. She, therefore, sought to bring about the appointment of a European Minister, in which she was strongly supported by Sidik Hasan Khán. The Government of India eventually acceded to her

request, and selected Colonel C. H. Ward for the post. Nawáb Abdul Latíf Khán served the State for just three months, and promised to be a very able administrator. He was withdrawn on Colonel Ward's appointment.

In December, 1881, a few days before the death of the Kudsia Begam, Her Highness received an invitation to attend a Chapter of the Order of the Star of India, which was to be held the following March in Calcutta. The invitation was accepted, and by the beginning of February all the necessary preparations were completed.

That I should be taken to Calcutta I had never for a moment doubted. At the time of the Prince of Wales's visit I had been ill, it was the cold season, and both the First Minister of the State and the Kudsia Begam were in Bhopál, and I could easily have been left in the charge of one or the other of them. Yet my going was insisted upon. This time I was in perfect health, the season was temperate, the Kudsia Begam was, alas! dead, and the First Minister was to accompany Her Highness. What was my surprise, then, to find that my name did not appear in the list of those who were to form the party! I was unable to understand it, but supposed that a separate order would be sent to me. When this did not come, I made inquiries of Her Highness personally, and, after a great deal of persuasion and argument, at length obtained permission to go. How the proposal to leave me behind came to be made will become apparent as the story goes on.

A telegram from the Political Agent informed

NAWAB ABDUL LATIF KHAN, C.I.E.

HAFIZ AHMAD RAZA KHAN.

us that we should reach Calcutta in the first week of March. The 4th of Rabbi-ul-awwal, 1299, A.H. (February 23rd, 1882) was, therefore, fixed upon as the day of our departure. As on the previous occasion, all the arrangements for our lodging in Calcutta were made by the Government of India, and the Political Agent chartered a special train for the journey from Itársi. The party consisted of Her Highness, myself and my children, Nawáb Sidik Hasan Khán, Nawáb Ihtishám-ul-mulk, and about 240 retainers. Although my Mother's displeasure was apparent on the journey, there were intervals when she treated me with kindness, and even affection. My husband, with whom I talked over these matters, consoled me to some extent by saying that my Mother's anger was only temporary, and had no special significance, though he knew as well as I did who our real enemy was.

On our arrival at Calcutta railway station, we were met by Captain How, the Under-Secretary, and Captain Baker, A.D.C. A guard of honour was also present, and a salute of nineteen guns was fired. On similar occasions I had always driven in the same carriage with my Mother, and no separate arrangements had been made for me. To my great astonishment and chagrin, my Mother now refused me a seat in her carriage, and Nawáb Ihtishám-ul-mulk had to procure me a hired conveyance. Fortunately, these are always available at the Calcutta railway station, otherwise I should have been in a most awkward predicament.

In the evening we were visited by Colonel Ridgeway, Under-Secretary to Government, the

Aide-de-camp in Charge, and Captain Taylor, who came to inquire after our welfare on behalf of the Viceroy. Four o'clock on the following afternoon was the time fixed for Her Highness to pay a State visit to His Excellency. A programme of the procedure[1] to be followed at this visit was drawn up, and a copy was sent to us from the Foreign Office. Besides myself, ten other people accompanied Her Highness. We were escorted by a squadron of British cavalry, and on reaching Viceregal Lodge we were met by the Military Secretary and the Foreign Secretary, a salute of

[1] "FOREIGN DEPARTMENT.

"FORT WILLIAM, *March 2nd*, 1882.

"*Reception of Her Highness the Begam of Bhopál, G.C.S.I., by His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor-General at Calcutta.*

"At 4.45 p.m. on Thursday, March 2nd, 1882, His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor-General will receive a private visit from Her Highness the Begam of Bhopál, G.C.S.I., in the Throne Room of Government House.

"The Brigadier-General Commanding the Presidency District and the District Staff will be requested to be present on this occasion.

"A carriage containing the Military Secretary, the Under-Secretary in the Foreign Department, and an Aide-de-Camp to His Excellency the Viceroy, will start from Government House at 4.5 p.m. for the purpose of escorting Her Highness from her private residence.

"On alighting from the carriage Her Highness will be conducted up the stairs of the Grand Entrance by the Military Secretary and the Under-Secretary, and will be received at the top of the stairs by the Foreign Secretary, by whom she will be conducted to the Throne Room. The Viceroy and Governor-General will receive Her Highness midway between the Throne and the entrance to the Throne Room, and will show her to a seat at his right hand.

"Immediately to the right of the Begam will sit the Political Officer on duty with Her Highness, next, the Nawáb Consort, the Nawáb Sultán Jahán Begam, and such of Her Highness's Attendants, not exceeding seven in number, as are entitled to a seat in the Durbar. On the left of the Viceroy and Governor-General will be seated the Foreign Secretary, the Brigadier-General Commanding the Presidency District, the Private and Military Secretaries to the Viceroy, the

nineteen guns again being fired. His Excellency welcomed us as we entered, and after shaking hands with us led us to our seats. Her Highness's chair was on His Excellency's right hand, the Political Agent's next, then mine, then the Nawáb Sáhib's, and those of the remainder of the party in the order of their rank. As we were about to take our places, Sidik Hasan Khán, seeing that my attention was occupied, for His Excellency was at that moment speaking to me, quietly appropriated my chair. The Political Agent, noticing what had happened, at once

Under-Secretary, His Excellency's Personal Staff, and the District Staff.

"The Begam will present a *nazar* of 151 gold mohurs, which will be touched and remitted.

"After a short conversation, the Nawáb Consort, Nawáb Sultán Jahán Begam, and Her Highness's Attendants, will be presented to the Viceroy by the Political Officer on duty with Her Highness, and will, each, offer a *nazar* of one gold mohur, which will be touched and remitted.

"'*Itr* and *pán* will be served to the Begam at the close of the interview by the Viceroy and Governor-General, and to the Nawáb Consort and the Nawáb Sultán Jahán Begam by the Foreign Secretary, and to the other Attendants by the Under-Secretary.

"The Viceroy and Governor-General will take leave of the Begam at the same point at which His Excellency received her, the Foreign Secretary will conduct Her Highness to the top of the Grand Staircase, and the Under-Secretary and Aide-de-Camp to His Excellency will accompany Her Highness back to her residence.

"Her Highness will be escorted to and from Government House by a party of Cavalry.

"The Marble Hall will be lined by a party of the Body-Guard.

"During the interview a Band will play at the head of the Grand Stairs.

"A Guard of Honour will be drawn up in front of Government House, and will salute on the arrival and departure of Her Highness.

"A salute of nineteen guns will be fired from Fort William on the arrival and departure of the Begam.

"Undress uniform will be worn.

"J. W. RIDGEWAY, *Lieut.-Col.*,

"*Offg. Under-Secretary to the Government of India.*"

motioned to him to move to his own lower place, which he was, of course, obliged, to his great mortification, to do.

My readers will remember that, at the instance of my Grandmother, Nawáb Sikandar Begam, the Government of India had decided that the consorts of the Begams of Bhopál should be Nawábs in name only; and since that time, on public occasions, the seat of the heir-apparent had always been above that of the Nawáb Consort, and, on the same principle, Nawáb Ihtishám-ul-mulk had always taken his place below that of Sáhibzádi Bilkis Jahán Begam or Sáhibzáda Nawáb Nasrullah Khán. But, at the time of which I am writing, not only was there a tendency to disregard this principle, but every effort was being made to increase the powers of Sidik Hasan Khán and to thrust me, the heir-apparent, into the background; and the incident I have just described is a good example of the methods that were employed.

In preparing such programmes, the Foreign Department had never, up to this time, been in the habit of assigning seats by name to the members of the Begam's suite, the order of precedence always being left to the decision of the Begam. On this occasion, however, the programme did specify the order in which those accompanying Her Highness were to sit, the necessary information having been supplied from the Begam's office; and the Nawáb Sáhib had, in fact, been assigned a seat above me. Previous to the durbar I myself had not seen the programme, and the Political Agent had evidently not observed the new arrange-

ment, or he would not have ordered the Nawáb to quit his seat. At the time the affair did not strike me as of great importance, and I did not expect to hear anything more about it. But my Mother was intensely angry and so displeased with me that she would not allow me to accompany her on her visit to Lady Ripon.

March 2nd was the day fixed for His Excellency's return visit. A short time beforehand, instead of the customary notice, a list of the seats was sent to me, in which I saw that I was again placed below Sidik Hasan Khán. Doubting the accuracy of the list, I refused to sign it, and sent for the Nawáb; but he professed entire ignorance as to who was responsible for the new arrangement. I was naturally greatly annoyed. Had the occasion been a private one, I should have concealed my indignation, and bowed to my Mother's ruling with the best grace I could. But at a public durbar of such importance I could not bear to have my rank disregarded without protest, and I accordingly wrote to Her Highness as follows:

"In the official programme, which embodies the arrangement of seats supplied by Your Highness's office, I am assigned a seat below that of Nawáb Sidik Hasan Khán. As this is contrary to the custom that has hitherto been observed at all public durbars and state visits, I beg that you will be kind enough to inquire of the Political Agent whether a mistake has not been made, or to allow me to make the inquiry myself. As the time fixed for the durbar is very close, I beg that the matter may be attended to without delay."

When my letter reached Her Highness, Sidik Hasan Khán and the Political Agent were both with her. I do not know what conversation took place, but at its conclusion the Political Agent came to me and prevailed upon me to attend the durbar, which I had decided in my own mind not to do. I went with considerable reluctance, and my mind was full of the slight that had been put upon me.

The next day, having received no answer to my letter, I sent a second:

"Three days ago I sent Your Highness a letter in regard to the seat assigned to me at the durbar on the occasion of the return visit of His Excellency the Viceroy of India. Having received no reply, I venture to call Your Highness's attention to the matter a second time. On former occasions my seat has always been above that of Nawáb Sidik Hasan Khán. This was so at the durbar in Bombay when Your Highness was decorated with the Star of India, as well as at the Calcutta durbar held during the visit of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. Indeed, for many years it has been customary in the State for the Heir-apparent to take precedence of the Nawáb Consort. Your Highness has given me to understand that my letter has been forwarded through the State Vakíl to the Political Agent, and that his reply will be communicated to me. As this reply has not reached me, I feel that my position is seriously compromised. I had intended not to be present at the last durbar, and it was only the advice of the Political Agent and my respect for the Government of India that induced me to change my mind. I now beg that you will be good enough to forward this letter also to the Political Agent, and that the

communication may be marked urgent; for I am determined not to leave Calcutta until a regular and formal decision has been come to. It is within the power of the Government of India to increase or decrease the rank of any person; and I ask for nothing more than an explanation of the change that has been made."

The result of this letter was that both my petitions were forwarded to the Government of India, and, soon afterwards, I received the following communication from my Mother:

"Your two petitions were forwarded by the Political Agent to the Government of India, and I send you herewith the reply that has been received. You will observe that it is not considered necessary that the official programme should state the order in which seats are to be occupied. This matter is to be left, as it always has been, to the decision of the Ruler."

Copy of the reply received from the Government of India:

"FOREIGN OFFICE, CALCUTTA, *March 8th*, 1882.

"MY DEAR KINCAID,

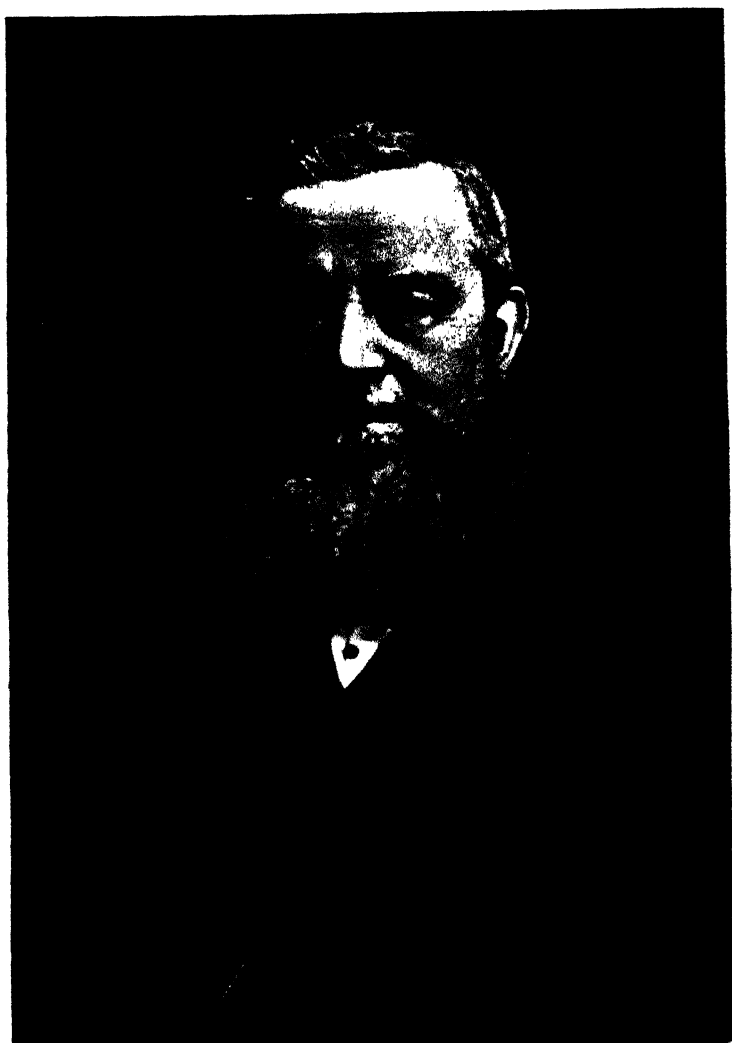
"In regard to the programmes of the visits exchanged between His Excellency the Viceroy and the Begam Sáhiba, and the seats assigned to the Nawáb Consort and Nawáb Sultán Jahán Begam, I have considered the subject, and I think it will be better, and in accordance with previous usage, to omit all names from future programmes, and after the words 'the Political Agent' to insert the words 'and those members of Her Highness's retinue who are entitled to be present at the durbar.' I will have a memorandum made to this effect, and the necessary alteration shall be made in the programme which is now being prepared.

"In future the order of sitting must be arranged privately, according to the rules prevailing in the State.

"Yours sincerely,
"THOMAS HOPE."

The durbar which gave rise to this lengthy dispute took place with all the prescribed formalities. My Mother presented His Excellency with a copy of *The History of Bhopál*, a Muhammadan head-dress, a silver *betel*-box, and a silver perfume-box, all of which were graciously accepted. All the officers who took part in the interview presented *nazarána*. In addition to my own, I presented, by my Mother's order, *nazarána* on behalf of my son Sáhibzáda Obaidullah Khán and my daughter Asif Jahán Begam, who were too young to make their appearance. Later in the day, Her Excellency Lady Ripon returned my Mother's visit. I was present on this occasion, and my Mother presented Her Excellency with a gold *guláband*, or jewelled necklace. While we were in Calcutta, my Mother visited many important institutions, and helped each of them with a subscription.[1] I was not permitted to

[1] The following is the list of institutions visited by Her Highness, with the amount of her subscription to each :

	Rs.
The Zenána Hospital	1000
The Bengal Asiatic Society	500
The Calcutta Madrissa	300
The Rest House	250
The Mayo Hospital	250
The Campbell Hospital	250
The Indian Agricultural Society	250
The Zoological Gardens and Museum	1000

THE EARL OF RIPON.

accompany her at such times, for her displeasure with me was now openly manifested. At different times, the Lieutenant-Governor of Bombay, His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief of the British Forces, Lady Grant, Captain Prade, and many other people of distinction called at our quarters, but I was not allowed to meet any of them.

It was while we were at Calcutta that we read in the newspapers of the attempt on the life of Her Majesty Queen Victoria.[1] The news of this outrage created a great sensation in Calcutta, and in all places of worship in the city prayers of thanksgiving that Her Majesty's life had been spared were said. Her Highness, through the Political Agent, cabled her congratulations to the Queen on her miraculous escape.

On 22nd Rabbi-us-sáni, we left Calcutta for Bhopál by special train. Early in the day, my Mother and I paid a farewell visit to Their Excellencies Lord and Lady Ripon, and drove straight from Viceregal Lodge to the railway station. We were escorted by a squadron of native cavalry, and the Under-Secretary, the Foreign Secretary, and an Aide-de-camp were present on the platform to bid us farewell. We reached Itársi in four days, and journeyed thence by road to Bhopál, our arrival being announced by the usual salute.

[1] Her Majesty had alighted from the train at Windsor railway station, and was about to drive to the Castle, when some villain discharged a revolver at the carriage in which she and Princess Beatrice had taken their seats. By the Grace of God the bullet missed its mark, and the would-be assassin was overpowered by two Eton boys before he could fire a second time. The royal carriage then proceeded on its way, Her Majesty praising her daughter for the coolness she had displayed.

The question of precedence which had arisen in Calcutta aroused afresh my Mother's resentment against me, and she took no pains to conceal the breach which was daily widening between us. Although I felt her treatment bitterly, I did not give up my habit of going daily to pay my respects to her, but each time her manner to me grew colder. About this time my son Nawáb Nasrullah Khán, who was just seven years of age, was attacked by a virulent form of intermittent fever. He frequently became delirious, and for twenty days his condition was extremely critical. We tried every kind of treatment to reduce the fever, but without success, and Nawáb Ihtishám-ul-mulk and I were at our wits' end to know what to do. One day we had almost given up hope, and in my despair I sent to tell my Mother of my son's state, for in time of trouble we instinctively turn to our natural protectors for help and guidance. I awaited her coming with the greatest anxiety, and God alone knows the comfort which the mere thought of her presence gave me, for it seemed to me that nothing else could avail to save my son's life. How bitter, then, was my disappointment when word was brought me that Her Highness, on receipt of my message, had withdrawn to her husband's apartment, and evidently had no intention of complying with my request! After a short time, my daughter Bilkis Jahán Begam and a companion were sent to make inquiries. From what they told us it transpired that Her Highness had been much distressed when she heard my message, and was on the point of coming to me, when the words of Sidik Hasan

Khán, "Go; he is your grandson, while I am only a stranger," though possessing hardly any intelligible meaning, had power enough to check her impulse, and my daughter was ordered to go in her stead. I then begged permission to send for Hakím Farzand Ali, who had attended us all from childhood, and who consequently knew our constitutions as no one else did. He had been dismissed from the service of the State, and was at this time employed at Rájgarh. But even this request was refused. I then called in Dr. Sheik Walli Muhammad, who was in charge of the Prince of Wales's Hospital, and on his advice I wrote to the Political Agent and requested him to send Dr. Eaton, the Agency Surgeon, from Sehore. Dr. Eaton came, and by the favour of God my son's condition began to improve, and in three weeks' time he had almost completely recovered his health.

After this, the estrangement between my Mother and myself increased to such an extent that the door which communicated with the Shaukat Mahal was kept closed except for a few moments each morning, when my daughter Bilkis Jahán Begam came to make her daily *salám* to me. Later on, Her Highness moved to the Táj Mahal, and even this small connection came to an end.

CHAPTER X

THE BHOPAL STATE RAILWAY

COLONEL H. DALY, in his *Memoirs of General Sir Henry Dermot Daly*, thus describes the state of Central India in the middle of the last century: "In the Central India of 1868 there was an entire lack of railway communication. The Great Indian Peninsular Railway extended only as far as Khandwa, while the terminus on the northern side of the province was Agra. In roads also Central India was deficient. With the exception of the Grand Trunk road from Bombay to Agra, which passes through Indore, Goona, Sipri, and Gwálior, there was practically not a yard of metalled road in the Agency."

It was a fortunate thing for the Province when, in 1868, Sir Henry Daly was appointed Agent to the Governor-General. It was a time of great distress. For two whole years the country had been devastated by famine, the horrors and hardships of which were increased tenfold by the absence of means of communication, which rendered any effective system of relief an undertaking of the utmost difficulty. The wretched people fled from

district to district, but only to find, on every side, starvation and death awaiting them. In the words of Sir Henry Daly's official report (quoted in the *Memoirs* referred to above): "Thousands perished from sheer starvation, and thousands from cholera and sun-stroke. Villages, and even districts, were depopulated, and there were none left to tell how many of the inhabitants had sunk under the miseries that oppressed them. Scindia computes the casualties in the neighbourhood of Gwálior at 92,987. Bodies and bones were found in *nálas*, and on the plains, under trees, and upon the way-side: and this over a vast space." In urging the Government to open up this portion of the country, Sir Henry Daly wrote: "This province, which yields an annual revenue of three millions sterling (two of which are received by the Government of India on account of opium exports), is without a mile of communication which can be used in the rainy season. Malwa, as regards the extent of cultivation, is still in a backward state: population is scanty, lands which would bear cotton and opium lie waste. With roads and a line of rail, Malwa would be to Central India what Bengal is to the North-West Provinces."[1] It was entirely through the influence and unceasing efforts of Sir Henry Daly that the Chiefs of Central India began to realize how essential railway communication was to the development of their territories. The Mahárája Holkar led the way by constructing a line from

[1] During this famine, Bhopál had not suffered so heavily as other places, and much grain could have been exported to the stricken districts had the means for doing so existed.

Khandwa to Indore, and his example was soon followed in Gwálior and Bhopál. In less than ten years' time, Sir Henry Daly had the satisfaction of seeing Central India traversed by a network of roads and railway lines, made and laid down at the expense of the Chiefs themselves, who thus became, by his instrumentality, the pioneers of the trade and prosperity of their province. The people of Central India will never forget what they owe to Sir Henry Daly. It is given to few people to win the confidence of an Indian community as he won theirs. The qualities that made him succeed are best described in the words of Colonel H. Daly. "He possessed," says that writer, "an extensive knowledge of the history of India generally, and of the States of Malwa in particular. He had a clear and precise conception of the Indian character, and, above all, he possessed a perfect temper, a buoyant good-nature, and the faculty of impressing his own high spirits and bonhomie upon those with whom he was brought into contact. Personal influence was the keynote of his success."[1]

It was during an interview with Sir Henry Daly, who came to Bhopál for the purpose, that Her

[1] Among the many evidences of the interest which he took in the ruling families of Central India, and of his anxiety to promote their welfare, is the College which he established at Indore for the sons of the Chiefs of the Province. That Colonel Daly now occupies the place which his father filled with such distinguished ability, is a happy circumstance for Central India. Among the many characteristics of his father that are reflected in Colonel Daly, none is more conspicuous than his desire to advance, to the utmost of his power, the intellectual and social well-being of the ruling Chiefs and their families: and there is good reason to hope that the Daly College will, under his fostering care, develop into a great Indian Public School, to the lasting benefit of this important Province.

SIR HENRY DALY.

Highness finally agreed to the construction of a State Railway from Itársi to Bhopál, promising to contribute funds from the State treasury, and to persuade the Kudsia Begam to advance money from her private purse. Soon afterwards, a letter was received from the Agent to the Governor-General, in which, after thanking Her Highness for her offer to provide funds for the railway, he informed her that His Excellency the Viceroy was only awaiting the decision of the Kudsia Begam before giving his sanction to the undertaking. It was then decided that a sum of thirty-five lákhs of rupees should be guaranteed, of which twenty-five lakhs should be contributed by the State in annual instalments of five lákhs, and ten lákhs by the Kudsia Begam in instalments of two lákhs, the whole amount to be advanced free of interest. Information to this effect was sent to the Government of India, and it was settled that interest at the rate of 4 per cent. should be paid to the State and to the Kudsia Begam from the profits of the railway, and that should any surplus still remain, it should be divided between the aforesaid parties and the Government, the latter being responsible for the execution of this contract, which was to hold good in perpetuity.

The Chief Engineer of the Great Indian Peninsular Railway prepared and forwarded to Her Highness two plans, each showing a different route for the new line, one passing through Chauka Bishankhéra, and the other through Bhut Plassy and Yár-Nagar. The choice was left to Her Highness, and she decided in favour of the former,

as it would pass through a more thickly populated area, and would command a heavier carrying trade.

These preliminaries being concluded, other details regarding the making of the line, its boundaries, and the sites for the stations were arranged; and it was agreed that any disputes that might arise between the State and the railway authorities should be referred to the Government for settlement, and that the decision then given should be regarded as final. His Excellency Lord Lytton wrote to Her Highness, expressing his satisfaction with the arrangements that had been made, and stating that the Agent to the Governor-General had been instructed to draw up an agreement. On December 29th, 1877 (23rd Zil Hijjah, 1294 A.H.), this document was received through the Political Agent, and was duly signed, sealed, and returned, a copy being preserved in the State office.

At this juncture Her Highness foresaw that a branch line connecting her capital with Itársi would be of no great advantage to the State unless it could be continued beyond Bhopál to join the Gwálior State Railway at Ujjain, or be carried on through Bhilsa to Gwálior, thus opening up direct communication with Agra and the north of India. After much correspondence, it was agreed that the survey should be continued through Bhopál as far as Sehore, and that, on the completion of the line from Agra to Gwálior, Bhopál should be connected with it. At the same time the State and the Kudsia Begam agreed to advance fifty lákhs of

rupees instead of thirty-five, the former contributing thirty-five lákhs and the latter fifteen. A plan of the Bhopál station was next prepared. Her Highness, however, objected to the site that had been selected, owing to the instability of the soil and the difficulty of obtaining a good water-supply. It was, accordingly, decided that the Political Agent and Nawáb Sidik Hasan Khán should select a site together, but that no further steps should be taken in this direction until the survey of the line should be completed.

In November 1878, the Agent to the Governor-General sent his First Assistant, Captain Barrow, to Bhopál with a letter to Her Highness, in which he again thanked her on behalf of the Viceroy for her liberality, and forwarded for her perusal a copy of the amended agreement. Her Highness accepted all the terms, but made certain suggestions in regard to the size of the waggons to be used on the new line, and stipulated that the work should be commenced on the first day of January 1880. A favourable reply having been received, preparations were made by the State to assist the work in any way that might be necessary, a special officer being appointed for this purpose. On October 14th, the agreement, which had been returned to the Government of India for ratification, was sent to Her Highness by the Political Agent, together with a request that the first instalments for the year 1880 might be paid to avoid all possibility of delay. Some years later, owing to the death of the Kudsia Begam, and to other altered circumstances, this agreement had to be

considerably modified. The arrangement as to the division of profits was finally settled in a supplementary agreement, dated October 14th, 1890. The clause runs as follows:

"The profits accruing on the aforesaid railway shall be divided in perpetuity between the British Government and the Ruler of Bhopál in proportion to the capital contributed by each party at the close of the period for which the accounts are made up. In the event of the railway being worked at a loss during any half-year or other period for which the accounts may be made up, such loss shall be borne by the British Government and the Ruler of Bhopál in the same proportions. This agreement shall take effect from January 1st, 1891."

It was on June 12th, 1882, that a private letter from the Chief Engineer of the railway informed Her Highness that trains had already begun to run between Itársi and Hoshangábád, while, at the same time, intelligence was received through the State Vakíl that the Agent to the Governor-General would come to Bhopál to open the line, and that the ceremony would take place on November 18th, 1864 (29th Muharram, 1303 A.H.). Her Highness at once set about preparing for his reception, and orders were issued for decorating the city in a manner worthy of so great an event. Invitations were sent through the Political Agent to the Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces, the Deputy Commissioner at Hoshangábád, the Chief Engineer of the Railway, and to all the officers at the Residency and the Agency. Special instructions were given to the Mohtamim of the

State *kár-khána* to arrange conveyances for the various visitors, and to see to their comfort on the journey from Itársi to Bhopál.

The Political Agent arrived on November 11th, and the Agent to the Governor-General on the evening of the 16th. Official etiquette prohibits the firing of salutes after sunset, and visitors whose arrival takes place at such an hour are not usually accorded a public reception. The Political Agent, however, informed Her Highness that in the Gwálior State public receptions had taken place after sunset, and, though such had never been the custom in Bhopál, he considered that the unique character of the occasion and the rank of her visitors would justify a departure from ordinary rules. Her Highness willingly consented to this proposal, and the necessary orders were given for carrying it into effect.

On November 12th, the Political Agent, accompanied by Mr. Cook, the State Engineer, and the Mohtamim of the *kár-khána*, went to the railway station to select a place for the opening ceremony. It was agreed that the large goods-shed would lend itself admirably to their purpose, and extensive arrangements were made for its adornment. Colonel Bannerman, Agent to the Governor-General, with his staff, reached Bhopál at 7.30 p.m. He was met at the Aish Bágh by the Political Agent and the Naib-ul-riyásat, the State troops, with the band and the *mahi-marátib*, forming a guard of honour. Colonel Bannerman shook hands with those present, and the Naib-ul-riyásat apologized on behalf of Her Highness, who, on account of the indisposition

of the Nawáb Sáhib, was unable to receive him in person. A procession was then formed, and His Honour drove off to the camp which had been pitched for his accommodation, the entire route being brilliantly illuminated and decorated with triumphal arches. The salute announcing his arrival was fired on the following morning. On the next evening the Commissioner of the Central Provinces arrived, and he too was accorded a public reception. On the morning of the 18th, Colonel Bannerman called upon Her Highness at the Shaukat Mahal, while the Nawáb Sáhib paid a visit to the Commissioner. Later in the day all the other guests visited the palace and paid their respects to Her Highness.

The opening ceremony took place at 4 o'clock in the afternoon. As stated above, the place selected for the assembly was the goods-shed, and, so well had the decoration committee done its work, that it may be safely said that no goods-shed ever wore a more impenetrable disguise. It was surrounded without by troops: the State cavalry on the eastern side, the infantry on the west, a battery of artillery at one end, and a line of elephants, magnificent in their state harness, at the other. Her Highness's seat was in the centre of the building: the Agent to the Governor-General and the other European guests occupied the space on her right, and that on her left was reserved for officers of the State and *purdah* ladies, for whom special accommodation had been made.

As soon as Colonel Bannerman had declared the

line open, a salute of thirty-one guns was fired, and Her Highness, having received the hearty congratulations of her many friends, arose and delivered the following speech:

"Colonel Bannerman, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I render a thousand thanks to Almighty God that He has permitted the State of Bhopál and its Ruler to enjoy the benign protection of Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen-Empress of India, through the benevolence of whose rule the light of Western science is now shining on this land, and through whom and the wise statesmen and brave soldiers sent to govern and protect us, we are able to look back upon years of peace and progress—years that have transformed the pathless jungles of Hindustán into rich and fertile plains, vying in beauty with the gardens of Cashmere. When I think of the interest Her Majesty has always taken in the welfare of this State, of the friendship which she displayed towards my august Mother, Nawáb Sikandar Begam, and of her unfailing kindness to myself, I seek in vain for words to express my gratitude. Nor am I less grateful for the kind and courteous treatment I have always met with from the Viceroys of India, their Agents in Central India, and the Political Agents in Bhopál. To you, Colonel Bannerman, my special thanks are due. I thank you most heartily for your congratulations on the completion of this Railway, and for your great kindness in coming here to-day to perform the opening ceremony. It is to yourself, to Sir Henry Daly, and to Mr. Griffin that congratulations should be paid on this memorable day, by whose advice this great work has been undertaken, and under whose supervision it has been carried out. I am very grateful to Colonel Kincaid for the good

advice he has given to me and to the Wallájah-Amír-ul-mulk Nawáb Sáhib, and for his constant help in all matters connected with the making of this line. Let all praise be given to God who has permitted us this day to see the realization of our hopes, and to taste the first-fruits of our labours. I trust that the Bhopál State Railway will in every way prove a success, and that it will lead to as big an increase in the revenue of the State as was predicted when its construction was first contemplated. I now look forward to the time when the Bhopál line will be connected with the Great Indian Peninsular Railway at Bhilsa, which, besides conferring a great benefit on the travelling public, will, I am confident, make a very considerable increase in our profits.

"But the advantages of the Bhopál State Railway are not all in the future. It has given to me and my people the great advantage and pleasure of welcoming to Bhopál the Agent to the Governor-General for Central India, and the many other distinguished guests who have come here to grace this occasion. In the name of the State, I bid you all a most hearty welcome to Bhopál, and I thank you for the honour you have done me in accepting my invitation. To those officers who have taken part in the construction of this railway, I once more offer my congratulations on the successful completion of their labours. I am sending a telegram to His Excellency Lord Ripon to inform him that the Bhopál State Railway is now an accomplished fact. His Excellency will, I am sure, receive the intelligence with great satisfaction, and will regard this day as one worthy to be remembered in the history of his Viceroyalty. In conclusion, I pray for the everlasting prosperity of the great empire of Her Majesty the Queen, and I trust that, by the Grace of God, the friendly

relations that have always existed between my State and the Crown may be strengthened day by day, and that Her Majesty will never cease to regard me as her grateful and loyal servant."

At the close of this speech, a telegram was dispatched to His Excellency the Viceroy, informing him that the line was open. All the visitors then embarked on a train which had been kept in readiness, and were conveyed to the railway station, where they found their carriages awaiting them. In the evening, a banquet took place at the Lal Kothi. Her Highness, according to her custom, joining her guests at the conclusion of the repast. As soon as she had taken her seat, the health of Her Majesty the Queen was drunk, after which Colonel Bannerman rose, and, in a brief but interesting speech, described the great political and commercial advantages which the new railway would confer not only upon Bhopál, but upon the whole of Central India. He spoke in high terms of the enterprise which Her Highness had displayed in providing, without security and free of interest, practically all the money required for making the line. He had no doubt, he said, that the future would prove this outlay to be a sound financial transaction, and he expressed the hope that Her Highness's example would be followed by many other ruling Chiefs. After referring to the proposed extension of the line through Bhilsa to Agra, and the impetus which would thereby be given to the trade and agriculture of the districts through which it was to pass, he asked his hearers to join him in drinking

to the health and long life of Her Highness the Begam, and to the success of Bhopál State Railway.

Colonel William Kincaid, Mr. Crosthwaite, Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces, and Colonel Thomson, also made congratulatory speeches, and, on their own behalf and that of the other guests, thanked Her Highness for the hospitable welcome which had been extended to them. The evening terminated with a display of fireworks. Colonel Bannerman and the Chief Commissioner left for Hoshangábád the next morning, and the other visitors departed in the course of the day.

The construction of the railway coincided with one of those periods when my Mother's displeasure with me was most marked. I, personally, therefore, was little acquainted with what was taking place, and my account is based upon what I have been able to glean from State records. In those days, all my time was occupied with domestic affairs, and particularly with the education of my children, of which I will give a brief account before passing on to the events of the next chapter.

Between the ages of my two sons, Nawáb Nasrullah Khán and Sáhibzáda Obaidullah Khán, there is a difference of only two years; and, though the elder began to study first, I was able to have them both educated together. Tutors were appointed to teach them Urdu, Persian, and handwriting, as well as to give them religious instruction; and they underwent, at the same time, a thorough training in military exercises. Moral instruction, without which education can never bear good fruit, they received at the hands of my

NAWAB NASRULLAH KHAN, HEIR APPARENT IN BHOPAL.

husband and myself. It had always been our desire that one of our sons should become a Háfiz, not only because amongst Muhammadans such persons are highly esteemed, but because to become a Háfiz is, in itself, an act of great piety. Seeing, therefore, that our youngest son was gifted with an unusually good memory, we decided that he was the better fitted to undertake the sacred task: and whilst he was engaged in committing the Holy Book to memory, his elder brother commenced to study English. Both of them worked hard and with zeal; and, in addition to the ordinary subjects of study, they read many Persian and Arabic books, from which they gained considerable knowledge of the world, as well as much wise counsel in regard to the conduct of life. Throughout the period of their education, the preservation of their health, and the cultivation in them of good manners and habits, ranked with me above all other considerations.

By the Grace of God, this system of education proved successful. My sons have grown up strong in mind and body, and their behaviour and habits are those of well-bred Muhammadan gentlemen. The manner in which they are able to discharge their duties, whether civil or military, shows that their early training was well suited to their needs. The study of English did not form a part of Sáhibzáda Obaidullah Khán's education. But he has since, with the help of my youngest son's English tutor, acquired a very serviceable knowledge of that language, and is able to converse in it freely and fluently on all ordinary topics.

CHAPTER XI

DEGRADATION OF SIDIK HASAN KHAN—COLONEL C. I. H. WARD—SIR LEPEL GRIFFIN

It has already been told how, on the occasion of my Mother's first marriage, the Government of India had ordained that the husbands of the Begams of Bhopál should, from that time forward, be Nawábs only in name, and should have no title to interfere in any matters connected with the administration of the State. It has also been told how, after her second marriage, this ordinance was neglected, and how Sidik Hasan Khán was permitted to raise himself, step by step, until he became the virtual ruler of Bhopál. Enough too has been said about the character of this man to enable my readers to form some idea of the disastrous results which his illegal assumption of authority produced. But it was not the evil influence of one man alone that brought the State to the verge of ruin. Sidik Hasan Khán had surrounded himself with a band of adherents who, besides being utterly unscrupulous, had no personal interest in the welfare of the State, and no sympathy with the people; and to these men

he gave, one by one, every high office that fell vacant, with the result that corruption and mismanagement spread into all branches of the administration.

Amongst his other occupations Sidik Hasan Khán devoted considerable time to literary work, and possessed some reputation as an author, chiefly on account of his contributions to the controversial literature of the day. This was a field which provided him with ample scope for his talents, but was, at the same time, one in which it was impossible for him to conceal his true character; and he soon achieved for himself a notoriety which contributed in no small degree to his downfall. Amongst his other writings there were three books entitled *Majmua Khutub*, *Hadáyat-us-Sáil*, and *Iktarábat-us-Saat*, which, though purporting to be religious treatises, constituted in reality an attack upon the British Government. These books were published just at the time when the British Army was pursuing the Mahdi in the Soudan, and it was not long before they were brought to the notice of the Government of India, who at once dispatched them to Sir Lepel Griffin, Agent to the Governor-General in Central India. On receipt of the books, Sir Lepel Griffin, through the Political Agent in Bhopál, explained to Sidik Hasan Khán the evil consequences of such writings, and warned him against committing such an offence again. To this warning Sidik Hasan Khán paid no attention whatever, and in the course of the next two years published several more books of an equally questionable character. Sir Lepel Griffin, who had in

the meantime gone to England on leave, found these books awaiting him on his return; and, hearing at the same time reports of the unsatisfactory condition of affairs in the State, he came to Bhopál to inquire privately into all these matters.

On August 27th, he had an interview with Her Highness, at which there were present Colonel Kincaid (the Political Agent), Munshi Dharam Naráyan, Mír Munshi of the Residency, Syad Abdul Ali, second Náib of the State, Syad Asgari Khán, and Syad Ináyat Husein Khán, the State Vakíl. All the charges to which Sidik Hasan Khán had laid himself open were explained in detail to Her Highness, but such was her confidence in him that she declined to believe any of them. The next day another interview took place, at which all the books written by the Nawáb Sahib were produced for examination. This time the Nawáb Sáhib himself was present. A large number of passages which had been previously noted were read aloud, and the Nawáb was asked what he had to say in reply. He attempted an explanation, but he was altogether unable to refute the accusations brought against him.

Six weeks later Sir Lepel Griffin again came to Bhopál, and on the 16th of Muharram, 1303 A.H., a durbar was held at the Shaukat Mahal, which was attended by all the chief officers of the State, as well as by Nawáb Ihtishám-ul-mulk, and my three elder children. The Agent to the Governor-General arrived, accompanied by his Staff and the Political Agent; and, after a brief and formal greeting, he turned to my Mother and said:

NAWAB SIDIK HASAN KHAN

"His Excellency the Viceroy has directed that Nawáb Sidik Hasan Khán be deprived of his titles and his salute, and that he shall in future abstain from all interference, direct or indirect, in the affairs of the State; and that, in the event of his disregarding this order, a punishment of a much heavier kind shall be dealt out to him. Seeing that by his usurpation of authority, and by the oppression that has characterized his acts, the condition of the State and its administration is in the highest degree unsatisfactory, His Excellency directs the appointment of a duly qualified Madár-ul-muhám who is to be given full administrative powers."

I need not tell my readers that this punishment was a heavy blow to Sidik Hasan Khán. My Mother felt his disgrace hardly less keenly. Although, throughout the proceedings, nothing had been done which cast any reflection on her character, or which implied that she was in any way responsible for the evils that had arisen, she, nevertheless, felt that the orders of the Government touched both her dignity and her honour. Sidik Hasan Khán had no one to thank for his punishment but himself, yet he imputed the whole blame to me and the members of my household. He did all in his power to convince my Mother that we had plotted his downfall, and to encourage in her the idea that it was in reality herself upon whom the orders of the Government had brought disgrace, inasmuch as the titles and salute of which he had been deprived were honours belonging not to himself, but to the position that he held as the husband of the Ruler of Bhopál.

My Mother firmly believed these accusations,

and was often heard to remark: "It is Sultán Jahán Begam and Sultán Dula who have brought this misfortune upon me." I declared my innocence, and expressed my readiness to undergo any test my Mother might propose in order to prove it. She accepted my suggestion, and said that the next time Sir Lepel Griffin came to Bhopál I should take an oath in his presence, and in the presence of Colonel Kincaid and Colonel Ward, and that these gentlemen too should be asked to swear on the Holy Bible that neither I, nor any member of my family, had had any part in bringing about the Nawáb Sáhib's disgrace. I replied that I was ready at any time to comply with Her Highness's desire. But Sidik Hasan Khán knew that his charges were unfounded, and seeing that the proof of my innocence would necessarily involve the disclosure of his own duplicity, he induced my Mother to abandon her design.

On February 16th, 1886, in accordance with the Order above referred to, Nawáb Abdul Latíf Khán, C.I.E., was, on the suggestion of Sir Lepel Griffin, and with the approval of His Excellency the Viceroy, appointed First Minister of the State. He held the post only for four and a half months. He introduced many useful reforms into the judicial and revenue departments, and arranged for the transfer of an experienced officer from the British service to take charge of the latter. The accounts were disentangled and audited, and the true financial position of the State ascertained, after which a budget for the coming year was prepared. Nawáb Abdul Latíf Khán displayed both energy

and ability, and, had he remained longer in Bhopál, would, in all probability, have brought the administration to a high state of efficiency. But Sidik Hasan Khán had set his mind on the appointment of an English Minister, thinking, for what reason I know not, that this would give him a better chance of regaining his lost powers and honours; and he induced Her Highness to apply to the Government for the appointment of Mr. Brook, Deputy Commissioner in Khandwa. Moved by Her Highness's repeated solicitations,[1] the Government at last consented to the appointment of a European, but selected for the post Colonel C. I. H. Ward, an officer with a high reputation for revenue work. He took charge from Nawáb Abdul Latif Khán on July 1st, 1886.

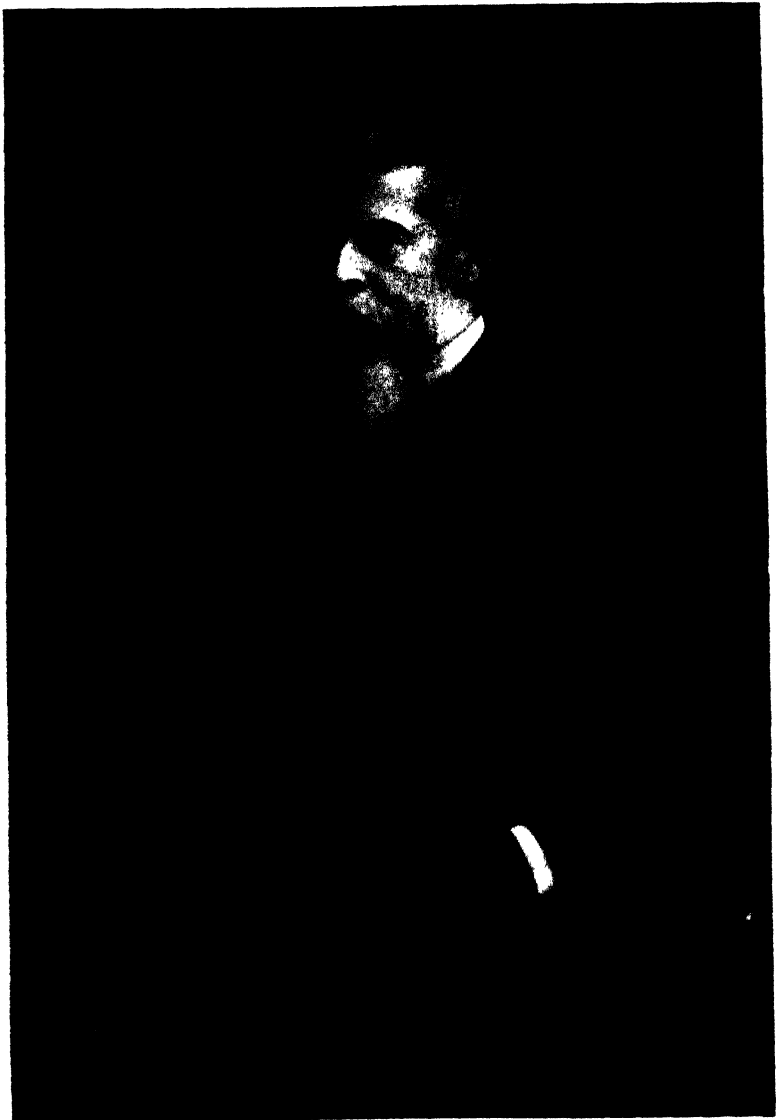
Colonel Ward was an able administrator and a thorough English gentleman. He was intimately acquainted with the Indian character, and rapidly gained the sympathy of the people. From the day of his appointment, he gave his whole heart to the task before him, bringing to bear on it an enormous capacity for hard work, a wide and practical knowledge of Indian law and finance, a quick insight, and a shrewd judgment, while in all matters that came before him he gave the fullest possible consideration to the interests and wishes of the people. His ministry was a period of uninterrupted progress. A forest department was opened, a survey of the State was executed, new roads were made, strong and effective measures were taken

[1] This was in direct opposition to the advice of Sir Lepel Griffin, who disapproved of the appointment of a European Minister.

to suppress bribery, and the police force was thoroughly reorganized.[1] As a result of these reforms, the revenue of the State showed a substantial and steady increase.

But even Colonel Ward did not succeed in pleasing everybody, and amongst the few who viewed his administration with disapproval was Sidik Hasan Khán. The *régime* of an English Minister had not resulted in that rapid restoration to rank and power to which he had been looking forward, and he soon became as anxious for his removal as he had before been to bring about his appointment. His efforts were, as usual, seconded

[1] In the reorganization of the police, very valuable assistance was rendered by Munshi Israr Hasan Khan. He was one among the many able officers who took service in Bhopal during Colonel Ward's ministry, and he now holds the post of Moin-ul-muham, or Chief Judicial Minister of the State. He came to Bhopal as Superintendent of Police, and by his hard work, his strict integrity, and his indifference to the opinions of all except his own superior officers, he gained the respect both of Her Highness and of Colonel Ward. Unfortunately, there were others who by no means appreciated Israr Hasan Khan's high sense of duty, and the very qualities I have mentioned procured him so many enemies that, on the retirement of Colonel Ward, he, too, resigned his appointment, and returned to the service of the British Government, from which he had been transferred.

Khán Bahádur Israr Hasan Khán is a member of a well-known family of the Háfiz Khail, in Shahjahánapúr. During the Mutiny, his father and uncles served the British Government with bravery and distinction. The former had his house burnt to ashes, and two of the latter were killed. Mr. Carmichael, Senior Member of the Board of Revenue in the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, concludes a short account of this family with these words: "Every member of this loyal family is entitled to our consideration and respect." The Government of India has not forgotten its obligations, and to this day any member of this branch of the Háfiz Khail who desires service is sure of an honourable post. Muhammad Israr Hasan Khán was a Deputy Collector in the district of Unao when his services were transferred to the State. In the year 1906 he received the title "Khán Bahádur" in recognition of his personal qualities and meritorious service.

COLONEL C. E. H. WARD.

by Nawáb Shah Jahán Begam, and the Government of India, only too glad to have the services of Colonel Ward again at its disposal, withdrew him after he had served the State for two and a half years.[1] Colonel Ward's successor was Munshi Imtiyáz Ali Khán, a Vakíl from the province of Oudh. He assumed charge of his office on the 17th of Rabbi-us-sáni, 1306 A.H.

Soon after the degradation of Sidik Hasan Khán, Sir Lepel Griffin again came to Bhopál, this time for a very different purpose, namely, to present to Háfiz Muhammad Khán, Mír Bakshi of the State troops, the badge of a Companion of the Indian Empire. The ceremony was performed at a durbar held in the Shaukat Mahal on February 20th, 1886. There were present Her Highness the Begam, myself, Nawáb Ihtishám-ul-mulk, Colonel Kincaid, Political Agent, the First Assistant to the Agent to the Governor-General, and a large number of nobles and state officials. Sir Lepel Griffin made an eloquent and interesting speech, which was afterwards read in Urdu by his First Assistant, and then, with his own hand, fastened the badge to the Mír Bakshi's breast.

[1] Muhammad Israr Hasan Khán tendered his resignation at the same time. Her Highness, being fully aware of the excellent work he was doing, at first refused to accept it; but, as he would not be persuaded to change his mind, she was compelled, with great reluctance, to let him go. My husband had a very high opinion of Israr Hasan Khán, and often spoke of him to me. Evidence of his ability reached me from other sources, and, when I became the ruler of the State, I applied to the Government of India for the transfer of his services. He has since risen step by step, and now holds one of the highest appointments in the State, a position which he fills in a manner that fully justifies the estimate I had formed of him.

Muhammad Hasan Khán had previously been decorated for his services during the Mutiny, but his medal had been lost or stolen, and the Government of India had permitted a duplicate to be made in Calcutta. This medal also Sir Lepel Griffin presented to him; and he was likewise the recipient of a *khilát*, or robe of honour, from Her Highness as a special mark of her favour.

The speech which Sir Lepel Griffin made on this occasion is too long to quote in full. From the extract which follows it will be seen how little my Mother is to be held responsible for the disorders which sprang up in the State during the period of her husband's control. Previous to her second marriage, the excellence of her administration had been constantly acknowledged by the highest officers of the Government. Those in whom she afterwards reposed her confidence would have deceived the ablest ruler. She lost none of the high qualities of heart and mind for which she had been previously distinguished: but, the marriage with Nawáb Sidik Hasan Khán once being accomplished, it became impossible for her to escape the destinies which that step involved.

At the commencement of the speech in question, Sir Lepel Griffin spoke in the highest terms of Her Highness's loyalty, and of the loyalty and bravery which had so often been displayed by previous members of her house. He then explained at considerable length the policy of the British Government in its dealings with Native States, and showed how much had been done by

Great Britain, both in India and elsewhere, to protect and further the interests of the Muhammadan race, instancing the support which had been given to Turkey during the Russo-Turkish war, and the protection which had been afforded to pilgrims to Mecca. Turning next to the State of Bhopál, he said :

* "For reasons to which I need not refer the administration of the State became thoroughly contemptible. Every class of the population, Hindu and Muhammadan alike, felt the hand of the oppressor, and lived in a perpetual state of fear. In the city all authority was vested in a few individuals, each of whom exercised simultaneously the powers of a magistrate, a policeman, and a gaoler. Neither life nor reputation was safe. Two of these magistrates, who had been guilty of oppression and cruelty, were at my suggestion, and with the consent of Her Highness, charged with their crimes in the Court of the Political Agent, where they were convicted, and sentenced to rigorous imprisonment. The assessment of village lands was increased to such an extent that a large number of *mustájirs* and cultivators were ruined, and seven thousand of the latter migrated from the State, and settled in the neighbourhood of Bhilsa in the territory of the Mahárája Sindhia. Lawsuits were won by those who could offer the biggest bribes, and the complaints of the poor passed unheeded."

After referring to Her Highness's endeavours to bring about a better state of things, Sir Lepel Griffin continued as follows :

* "On a happy occasion such as the present I should not refer to a subject painful both to Her

Highness and to myself, were it not that I wish to take this opportunity of proclaiming publicly Her Highness's wise and courageous resolution to put down every evil that is brought to her notice, and to introduce such reforms as will result in the permanent benefit of her subjects. She has appointed a Muhammadan gentleman[1] of distinguished ability and high reputation to be the Minister of the State, and has placed the control of all departments and offices in his hands. He will be subject to no outside interference, but will deal in all matters directly with Her Highness. I am sure that when the people of Bhopál become acquainted with this reform and its beneficial results they will congratulate themselves on their good fortune in living under the sway of a Ruler who is ready to hear a complaint or to redress a wrong the moment she becomes aware of its existence.

"There is no State in India which Her Majesty the Queen and His Excellency the Viceroy regard with more friendly interest than the State of Bhopál, which, whether in peace or adversity, has always remained the true friend of the British Government. This loyalty will be all the more appreciated when it becomes known how Her Highness the Begam has determined to legislate for the good of her people, and to root out, once and for all, oppression and corruption from her territories.

"On behalf of His Excellency the Viceroy, I beg to congratulate Her Highness on the wise course she has adopted, and I trust her good fame will advance, step by step, with the happiness of her subjects and the prosperity of her State."

The events just narrated show how closely Sir Lepel Griffin is connected with the history of my

[1] Nawáb Abdul Latíf Khán, C.I.E.

SIR LEPEL HENRY GRIFFIN.

family, and how keen an interest he took in the affairs of the State. He was a statesman of unusual ability, possessing bold determination and a deep, if somewhat stern, sense of justice; while in all matters that came before him, whether for advice or decision, he displayed both patience and sympathy. The smallest detail never escaped his notice, and his opinion once formed was seldom altered. In the case of Sidik Hasan Khán he acted with forbearance and kindness; and it was not until these means had proved unavailing that he had recourse to the sterner measures I have described. Throughout these painful proceedings, he showed the greatest consideration for my Mother, and carefully avoided any step which might cast a slur upon her character. Indeed, he spoke highly of her at all times, for he fully recognized her many good qualities. He rightly held Sidik Hasan Khán and his adherents responsible for the evils which had sprung up in the State, and he saw that my Mother was blind to the deceptions that were practised upon her, and powerless to escape from the network of intrigue by which she was surrounded.

After his retirement, Sir Lepel Griffin continued to take an active interest in the affairs of the land he had served so well, and his opinion, whether spoken or written, on Indian matters was always considered of the highest value. The friendly relations that exist to-day between India and Afghánistán were largely of his making. The late Amír, Abdul Rahman Khán, in his autobiography writes:

"I consider the present friendly situation to be largely due to the wise and politic manner in which negotiations with me and the people of Afghánistán were conducted by Sir Lepel Griffin, and I do not think that the services that he rendered to his Government have been adequately rewarded. If General Roberts deserved to be created Lord of Kandahár, he equally deserves the title Lord of Kábul."

The news of Sir Lepel Griffin's premature death was a heavy blow to his many friends in India, where he will be remembered as one who devoted his life to the advancement and protection of British interests, and to the strengthening of British power.

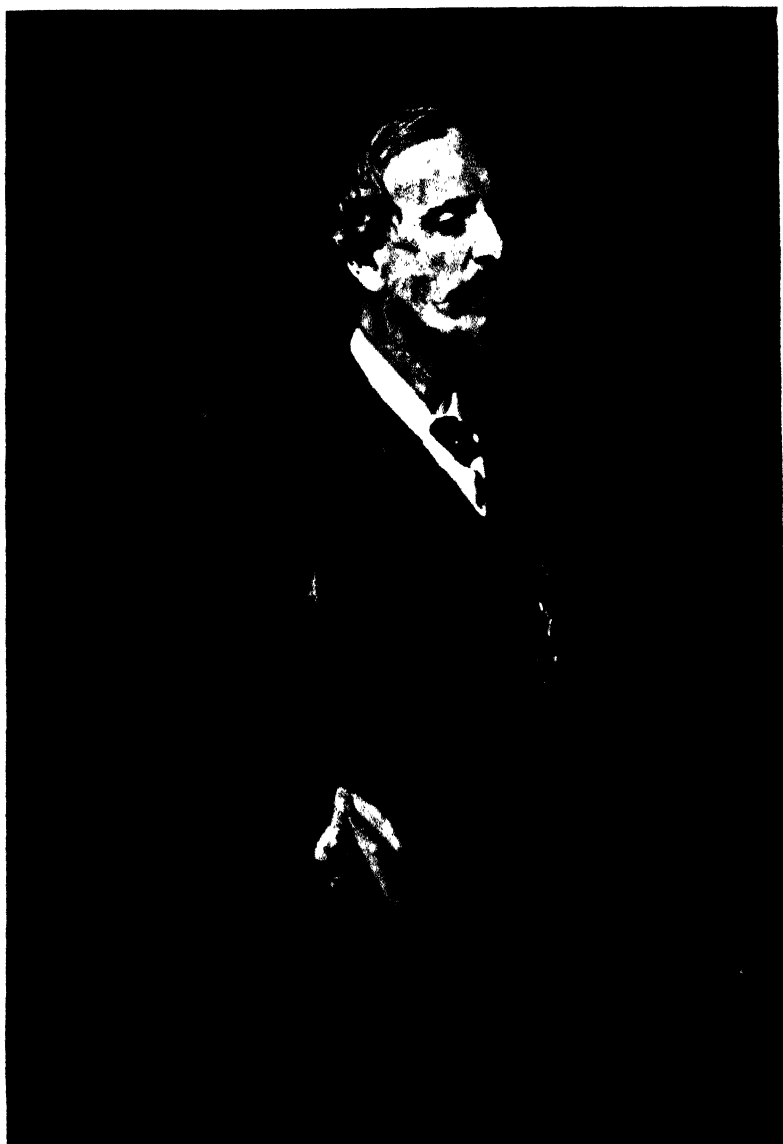
CHAPTER XII

THIRD JOURNEY TO CALCUTTA—JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS

HER HIGHNESS felt the degradation of Sidik Hasan Khán so keenly, and was so convinced that he was the victim of a conspiracy set on foot by her own enemies with the ultimate object of overthrowing her rule, that she determined to go to Calcutta, and, in a personal interview with the Viceroy, ask for a reinvestigation of the whole affair. Sidik Hasan Khán had decided to go also; but the Agent to the Governor-General, hearing of his intention, informed him, through the Political Agent, that this could not be allowed. He was accordingly left behind, and Her Highness, accompanied only by Bilkis Jahán Begam and a few retainers, set out from Bhopál on March 8th, 1886. On her arrival at Calcutta she was met by the Secretary to the Government of India and an Aide-de-camp. A carriage drawn by four horses was waiting at the railway-station, in which she drove with Bilkis Jahán Begam to Chauringhi Road, where a house had been engaged for her accommodation.

On March 12th, Her Highness paid a State

visit to the Viceroy at Government House, being accompanied by Bilkis Jahán Begam, Mián Akbar Muhammad Khán, Mián Ashík Husein, Syad Abdul Ali, second Náib of the State, the State Vakíl, and Munshi Diu Diál, Mír Munshi of the Sehore Agency. The following day, His Excellency paid a return visit, in the course of which my Mother explained the object of her journey to Calcutta, His Excellency listening, but making no comment. On March 14th, a visit was paid to Lady Dufferin, which was also returned the following day. During her sojourn in Calcutta, many other ladies and gentlemen called on my Mother, amongst them being Mrs. Durand, wife of the Foreign Secretary, and the wife of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal.

On March 18th, a second and private interview with His Excellency took place, at which my Mother presented a *kharíta*, dealing with the affairs of Sidik Hasan Khán, and concluding with a request that the Deputy Commissioner of Police in Calcutta might be appointed Minister of the State. His Excellency accepted the *kharíta*, and said he would give his reply after submitting it to Sir Lepel Griffin. Shortly afterwards, Mr. Durand came to see my Mother, and in a kind and courteous manner gave her to understand that no alteration in the orders of the Government was possible. Mr. Durand was intimately acquainted with the character and customs of the Afghán people, and, as his father had been Agent to the Governor-General for Central India during the rule of Nawáb Sikandar Begam, he was specially

THE MARQUIS OF DUFFERIN AND AVA.

interested in the Bhopál State. He expressed great sorrow on account of the troubles which had befallen my Mother, and with much friendly sympathy pointed out to her that they were the direct consequence of her departure from the traditions of her race in contracting a second marriage, and in selecting for her consort a man of alien race and low degree.

Although His Excellency had found it impossible to comply with my Mother's request, he showed her every mark of respect and friendship. To Bilkis Jahán Begam he was specially kind. On one occasion she was taken by Colonel Kincaid to a Flower Show, at which both His Excellency and Lady Dufferin were present. His Excellency greeted her in the kindest manner, and said, "Do you know that I have actually risen from a bed of sickness to have the pleasure of seeing you here to-day?" Bilkis Jahan thanked him for his kind words, and then Lady Dufferin took her to see the aviary and other interesting features of the show.

Her Highness remained in Calcutta for twenty-five days. Her arrival had been announced in most of the papers; and one of these, a Bengali organ called *The Indian Mirror*, went so far as to state that the Begam of Bhopál had come to Calcutta to consult the Viceroy on the reorganization of her Government. As a consequence of this, a large number of Bengali pleaders, and others who apparently thought that the situation offered opportunities, found their way to Chauringhi Road. They met with no success, however, for not one

of them was granted an interview. Her Highness subscribed liberally to many institutions in Calcutta: Rs. 10,000 was given to the Lady Dufferin Fund, Rs. 1,500 to the Bible Society, Rs. 2,000 to the Islámia Madrissa, besides a scholarship of Rs. 6,000 to enable a student to study either Law or Medicine in England for three years, with an additional Rs. 1,200 for the expenses of his journey. On April 7th, Her Highness left for Bhopál.

There is one other incident connected with this visit to Calcutta which deserves to be recounted because it shows that, in spite of the constant efforts that were made to embitter the relations between my Mother and my family, yet her affection for me never wholly disappeared from her heart. It happened that when preparations were being made for the journey, I fell sick, and, though I was much better by the time the day of departure arrived, I had not fully recovered. My Mother had been in the habit of receiving reports of my health from Bilkis Jahán, and her anxiety on my account was made known to me by the same means. I used to call Bilkis Jahán my little fairy ambassador, and looked forward to her daily visits with infinite pleasure; for I was always anxious to see her, as well as to hear what intelligence she might bring me. God rest her gentle spirit: many a time, like an angel of mercy, she came to me with tidings that filled my heart with thankfulness and joy; and it was a sad day for me when I learnt that my little ambassador had been deprived of her office.

As I have already said, my health was improving

THE MARCHIONESS OF DUFFERIN.

rapidly when my Mother set out for Calcutta. As days went by, and the period of her absence became unusually prolonged, there were certain people who began to feel anxious lest by the influence and advice of those in high places, and by associating with European ladies of high rank, Her Highness's ideas and inclinations might be changed or modified in a manner that would be by no means acceptable to them. They accordingly contrived a plan by which they knew that she would be thrown into a state of great anxiety and agitation. Their object was twofold: firstly, to induce her speedy return to Bhopál: and, secondly, to increase the disfavour with which she already regarded my husband, Nawáb Ihtishám-ul-mulk.

The plan was a simple one. Letters purporting to be from various quarters were sent to Calcutta, giving a most alarming account of my health, and accusing the Nawab Sahib of neglecting me to such an extent that there was very little hope of my recovery. These letters reached my Mother, and caused her the greatest uneasiness. She sent at once for Joan Bourbon, a highly connected French lady,[1] who was governess to Bilkis Jahán Begam, and with tears of sorrow on my account, and violent manifestations of anger against the Nawáb Sáhib, told her of the news she had received. Joan Bourbon proposed to write at once to Bhopál for further particulars. Her Highness agreed, but thought it better that the letter should

[1] For an account of the Bourbons of Bhopal, see Vol. III. of the *Central India State Gazetteer*, pp. 106-7.

be written by Bilkis Jahán. "She is her child," she said, "and it will appear only natural that she should inquire after her mother's health." It was decided that the letter should be addressed to the Nawáb Sáhib, as I was apparently so dangerously sick. The following letter was therefore dispatched:

"To the *Kiblah* and *Kábah* of both the Worlds, Sultán Dula Sáhib Bahádur,—

"The news of the grievous sickness of my honoured Mother, which has reached us through letters from Bhopál, has plunged us all in the deepest anxiety. For the love of God, do not leave us, who are absent, in suspense, but send us tidings with all the speed possible, that our hearts may be comforted."

When this letter reached Bhopál, it was brought to me by the Nawáb Sahib, and the following reply was at once sent:

"Light of my eyes, your letter shows that you have received news about my health which has caused you anxiety, letters from Bhopál having informed you that I am dangerously ill. Your letter was shown to me by your Father, and that you may be the more comforted, I am writing the reply to it with my own hand. The weakness which you saw in me has disappeared, and by the grace of God I am now in perfect health, and looking forward to the return of Her Highness and yourself. I pray that your journey may be a safe one."

When my Mother returned to Bhopál, we learned from Bilkis Jahán Begam and from Joan Bourbon,

how real her anxiety on my account had been, and I rejoiced to think that, whatever troubles might come upon me through the malice of others, the ties of blood could never be wholly severed.

During the succeeding two years, only one event occurred which calls for notice—namely, the Jubilee of Her Majesty the Queen-Empress. In India the celebration took place on February 16th, 1887, a day that will always be remembered as one of universal joy. The date was officially communicated to Her Highness some weeks beforehand, and she decided to commemorate the great event, not only by holding a durbar and general festivities, but by the erection of a memorial which should confer a permanent benefit on the people of Bhopál. It was decided that this memorial should take the form of a *band* to the Shahjahánábád lake, and should be called the Kaisar Embankment. Orders were issued by Colonel Ward that the day was to be observed as a general holiday, and arrangements were made for a review of troops, illuminations, a banquet to the European residents, and the release of a number of prisoners. A sum of a hundred rupees was sent to the Political Agent for feeding the poor in the Sehore cantonment, and a full report of all the preparations was sent to the Agent to the Governor-General.

On the appointed day, a salute of 101 guns was fired from the Fatehgarh fort, and a review of the entire Bhopál army took place on the Jahángírábád parade ground, at the close of which a sum of five hundred rupees was distributed among the soldiers. Twenty-four prisoners were released

from gaol, five of whom were under life sentences, and two others had their sentences reduced. Colonel Ward, on behalf of Her Highness, laid the foundation stone of the Kaisar Embankment, and at night the entire city was illuminated, forts, palaces, offices, private houses, and bazars glittering with all the colours of the rainbow. The Jahángírábád lake was also illuminated, and a brilliant display of fireworks took place in front of the Purána Kothi, where the European guests were being entertained. During the day, Her Highness sent a congratulatory cablegram to Her Majesty the Queen, to which the following reply was received through the Agent to the Governor-General:

"Her Imperial Majesty has directed His Excellency the Viceroy to thank you very warmly for your congratulations."

A few days later, Her Highness received a *kharíta* from His Excellency in confirmation of this message, containing many expressions of kindness and good-will. By Her Highness's order, this *kharíta* was read out to the troops on the parade ground, and a *kharíta* was sent in reply, gratefully acknowledging His Excellency's kindness, and containing an account of the rejoicings which had taken place at Bhopál.

The Jubilee was not celebrated in England till June 21st. This day was also observed as a holiday in Bhopál, and a salute of 101 guns was again fired. Her Highness sent a second cablegram to Her Majesty, through the Agent to the Governor-General, which was as follows:

"The Begam of Bhopál sends her most hearty congratulations to Her Majesty the Queen-Empress on the completion of fifty years of her reign."

A reply was received on August 1st:

"Her Majesty the Queen-Empress heartily thanks you for your congratulations."

Soon after the making of the Kaisar Embankment had commenced, Her Highness decided to have another memorial of Her Majesty's Jubilee, on an even larger scale, which was to take the form of an extension to the city water-works. On more than one occasion, Dr. Dane, the Agency Surgeon, had condemned the water of the lower lake as being unfit for household use. It was, therefore, decided to make this water available for irrigation in the gardens and fields to the north of the town, and at the same time to supply drinking-water from the Táláb Kalán, or large lake, to Jahángírábád and other quarters unconnected with the existing works. The water for irrigation was to be conducted to its destination by means of a channel starting from the Pukhta Pul, or northern *band* of the lower lake, while the drinking water for the city was to be conducted in pipes from the Táláb Kalán to the entrance to the new channel, where a large water-wheel would pump it up into the city. The plans and estimate (amounting to over three lákhs of rupees) were prepared by Mr. Cook, the State Engineer, and as soon as they had been approved by Her Highness the work was commenced. It was completed in three years; and

on Ramazán 21st, 1308 A.H., water flowed into Jahángírábád and the Nishát Afzah garden. Many new branches have since been opened, and water is now carried as far as Islámnagar, a distance of more than six miles from the city.

CHAPTER XIII

DEATH OF BILKIS JAHAN BEGAM

Before I tell the manner of my beloved daughter's death, I propose to acquaint my readers with the main circumstances of her brief life, for they have a considerable bearing on the events recorded in this history, and explain, to a large extent, the hostile attitude towards me of Sidik Hasan Khán, of whose machinations she was for some time the innocent and unconscious centre.

When only four months old, Bilkis Jahán Begam was vaccinated for small-pox. She was at that time living with me, and my Mother had clearly told me that she did not propose to follow the example of Nawáb Sikandar Begam (who, as my readers will remember, took upon herself the entire responsibility of my up-bringing), and had no intention of removing my daughter from my care. When, however, the vaccination had taken place she came to me and said, with great kindness, "You yourself are still very young. I will take care of Bilkis Jahán until she has quite recovered her health." And my daughter was accordingly removed to her house.

As soon as the effects of the vaccination had

passed away, I inquired of Joan Bourbon, her governess, when she would be sent back to me. She was unable to give me any answer, and informed the Begam of my question. Later in the day when, according to my usual custom, I went to see my Mother, I was received with every sign of anger. Guessing the cause of this, I at once explained that I had no objection whatever to her keeping my daughter as long as she desired to do so, and that the only reason why I had inquired about her return was that I had understood the arrangement to be a temporary one, necessitated by the vaccination. Nothing more was said on the subject, but soon after my return my Mother herself brought Bilkis Jahán to my palace and left her there. The nurse followed a few minutes later, and then the door between our palaces was shut and locked. Late the same evening Sidik Hasan Khán came to me. He said that Her Highness was in great distress, and begged me to send my daughter back. I replied that I was perfectly willing to do so, and she accordingly returned with him to her Grandmother's house.

In spite of her anger against me, which after the journey to Calcutta increased to such an extent that all communication between our families came to an end, my Mother nevertheless continued to keep my daughter in her possession, and to treat her with as much kindness as ever. As long as my Mother continued to live at the Shaukat Mahal I saw my daughter daily, but after the removal to the Táj Mahal she was seldom sent to me more than twice or three times a week. When Bilkis

Jahán reached her seventh year, she was told to report to her Grandmother all conversations that took place between herself and me, and at the same time certain female attendants of my Mother received orders to accompany her whenever she visited me, and to take note of everything that was said either by my husband or by me. We might very well have resented the intrusion of these women, but so little thought had we of saying anything that could give offence to Her Highness that we paid no attention to their presence, and if they reported nothing but what they heard they can have done us little harm.

Meanwhile, Sidik Hasan Khán's influence over my Mother grew stronger and stronger, and her unfriendly attitude towards me and my family became more and more pronounced, till at last our position came to be little better than that of State prisoners, so closely were our actions watched and our movements prescribed. It was always a sore point with Sidik Hasan Khán that his sons were in a more or less inferior position in the State, and possessed none of the privileges belonging to members of the ruling family. It was also a bitter disappointment to him that Her Highness bore him no son, for the birth of a child, and particularly of a male child, would have added greatly to the importance of his own position, and would at the same time have rendered him a far more powerful and formidable antagonist. Long ago he had sought to bring about a marriage between myself and one of his sons, but, finding that he had not sufficient influence to upset the

plans of Nawáb Sikandar Begam, he considered discretion the better part of valour, and posed as the supporter of the marriage which she had arranged, although it seemed to give the death-blow to his ambition. The birth of Bilkis Jahán Begam, however, opened up new possibilities, and he was not long in laying his plans, of which the removal of the child to my Mother's control—and therefore to his own—was the first step. This he contrived with such skill that we saw in it nothing more than the evidence of a grandmother's affection, and even my Mother herself was probably unaware that she was being influenced by anything but her own inclinations. Had we seen through Sidik Hasan Khán's design, it is doubtful if we could have done anything to frustrate it; for if, without being able to assign any adequate reason, we had rejected my Mother's offer, made apparently with the kindest intentions, our action would have been generally condemned, and my Mother would have felt herself grievously affronted.

Sidik Hasan Khán used all his influence and all his resources to further his cherished object. Although the son in question already had a wife, and not only a wife but children also, he was made the constant companion of Bilkis Jahán Begam, and, whether in play-time or lesson-time, was always to be found at her side. At the same time Her Highness commenced to reside permanently at the Táj Mahal in Shahjahánábád, as a result of which I seldom saw my daughter more than once a week.

SAHIBZADI BILKIS JAHAN BEGAM.

Matters continued thus until Bilkis Jahán Begam reached her eleventh year, and then her marriage with Ali Hasan Khán began to be openly discussed. Finding our suspicions confirmed, and learning that Her Highness, in spite of the fact that Ali Hasan Khán had a wife and children living, and was a stranger by birth, had given her consent to the betrothal, my husband and I were in great consternation, and determined, at all costs, to get our child back to her own home, lest she might consent to the proposal through fear of my Mother's anger; for it is the custom throughout the East for children to abide, in such matters, by the decision of the elders of the family. Whilst we were seeking means to combat the difficulties, intrigues, and even dangers which now began to surround us, Bilkis Jahán Begam fell seriously ill. For several days continuously she was in a high fever, and suffering acute pain in her chest. She was attended by a native Hakím, and neither I, nor any one belonging to me, was allowed to see her.

On a former occasion, when she had been ill with fever, she had begged so earnestly that her father might be allowed to come and see her, that Her Highness, although at this time the Nawáb Sáhib was deep in her displeasure, could not deny the request. She herself, however, left the palace the moment he arrived, and for twenty-four hours did not return. Bilkis Jahán wept bitterly at her grandmother's absence, and when she came back, promised never to ask for her father again. The remembrance of this trouble and the promise she

had made revived in her mind as she again lay ill; and, greatly as she longed for her parents to come and see her, she was true to her word, and never once asked that they might be sent for. I made constant inquiries, but to none of my messages did I receive any answer; and when I sent my own confidential attendant, she was not even admitted into the palace. All that she could tell me on her return was that, as she was coming away, a voice had called out to her from the window of Bilkis Jahán's chamber, "Go; by the Grace of God, all is going on well."

After this, for the space of two weeks, all kinds of contradictory reports reached me, and my state of mind can better be imagined than described. At the end of this time, to my unbounded relief, my daughter came to see me. She was better, but so weak that she could scarcely walk. There were deep black lines under her eyes, and her skin was the colour of saffron. We learnt for the first time that she had been suffering from pneumonia. For the sake of her health and our own peace of mind, as well as on account of the marriage question, we made up our minds that she should not again leave our house.

When the Begam heard of this determination, she was on the point of coming herself to fetch my daughter away. Had she come, had she seen me in my own home with my happy children about me, there can be little doubt that her heart, which was by nature tender, would have relented towards us, and all the growing discord might have been turned to harmony. But this possibility also oc-

curred to Sidik Hasan Khán, whom the prospect of harmony inspired with anything but heavenly joys. He assured my Mother that if she entered her daughter's house she would meet with insult and indignity at the hands of her son-in-law. His words invariably cast a kind of spell over her, which she seemed powerless to resist. She at once changed her mind, or, at any rate, her plans; and sending for Colonel Ward, begged him to use any means in his power, even military force if necessary, to get Bilkis Jahán Begam restored to her.

In the meantime, my daughter began rapidly to regain health and strength: but her separation from her grandmother, to whom, as I have already said, she was greatly attached, often made her unhappy, though she did her best to conceal her grief. She loved her parents, and she loved to be with her brothers and her sister. But having been brought up by the Begam from the time when she was four months old, she naturally clung with all a child's affection to the nurse of her early years, and to the surroundings with which all the recollections of her childhood were associated. Painful as it was to me to see her tears, I could do nothing but persevere in the course I had taken. My Mother's anger was intense, and the knowledge that she too was unhappy added, in no small degree, to the perplexities of my position and the affliction of my mind. Many, who were unable to see beneath the surface, branded me as disrespectful and heartless. But whether I should have been justified in risking the future happiness of my child in order to save myself from trouble and

obloquy, is a matter I leave to the judgment of my readers.

On receiving the above-mentioned instructions, Colonel Ward came to see me, and I told him exactly how matters stood, and confided to him all my suspicions and fears. Colonel Ward was a wise and able Minister, and he was fully acquainted with the nature of the present feud, and the causes which had led to it. After listening attentively to my statement, he expressed his determination to do all that lay in his power to bring about a reconciliation between my Mother and myself. I assured him that there was nothing I so earnestly desired, and that I would second his endeavours to the utmost of my ability. For more than a year he persevered in his efforts, and at last persuaded my Mother to agree that if Bilkis Jahán Begam were again placed in her charge, I should be allowed to visit her whenever I chose to do so. My Mother caused an actual agreement to this effect to be drawn up, a copy of which was sent to me. I expressed myself ready to abide by all the conditions laid down, and made only one stipulation, namely, that I should be allowed to take up my residence close to the Táj Mahal, so that I might be within easy reach of my daughter. Colonel Ward at once saw the fairness of this condition, but my Mother refused to accept it, and the agreement came to nothing.

I was, however, much easier in my mind than I had been at first, for the time that Bilkis Jahán had spent in her own home had worked a considerable change in her. She was now completely

restored to health and spirits, and was living a happier life than she had ever known before. At the Táj Mahal there had been none to play with her, and, with the exception of her grandmother, none who had any real affection for her. She now found herself surrounded with loving friends and happy playmates, and everything that could make her childhood pleasant. Moreover, as she grew older and her character developed, she began to view the world from a less childish standpoint, and her opinions and actions often showed shrewd judgment as well as considerable will power. She was now altogether averse from returning to her grandmother's house, and steadily withstood all the efforts that were made to tempt her to go there. She still loved the Begam, but she was able to see, and she felt as keenly as any of us, the injustice with which her family was being treated, and she declared that she would not go to Shahjahánábád until her mother could go with her. She made many earnest and pathetic appeals to the Begam on my behalf. But an appeal to the Begam was only another name for an appeal to Sidik Hasan Khán, and the will of the former, and not the inclination of the latter, dictated its reply.

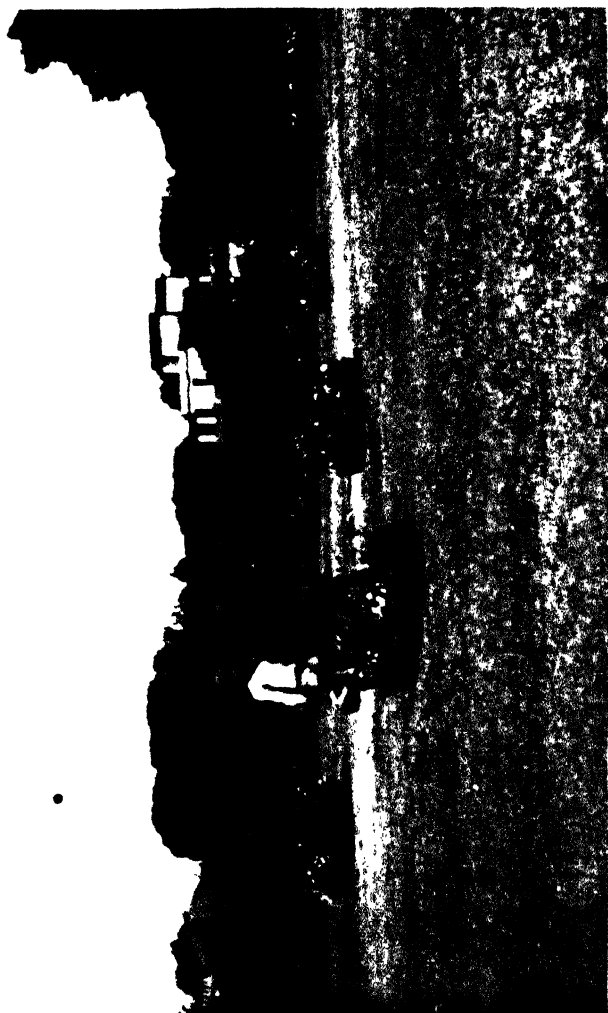
In arranging my Mother's papers after her death, I came upon several of the letters which were at this time written to her by Bilkis Jahán Begam. Many of them were in fragments, and, being written in the yet unformed hand of a child, were not easily legible. It will be sufficient if I quote one of them, which runs thus:

"My dear Grandmother, do you not love me still? If you do, why do you not forgive my Mother? She is thinking about you just as much as you think about me. Please forgive her for my sake. Tell me when you are going to call her to you. If you do not call her, I shall know that you do not love me."

That the Begam's heart was touched by these letters I cannot doubt; but they produced no visible effect, nor from that time forward did I ever receive from her any tokens either of affection or forgiveness.

In the month of Shábán, 1304 A.H., Bilkis Jahán Begam was attacked by a severe fever. My house, which was situated in the heart of the city, was small and ill-ventilated. Even when I had lived alone with my husband, it had barely sufficed for our accommodation; and now that I had four children, and, in consequence, a much larger number of servants, all of whom lived on the premises, the building was most unhealthily crowded. I, therefore, removed my daughter to the Háyat Afzah garden, hoping that the change to a purer atmosphere would restore her to health. It soon became apparent that she was suffering from typhoid fever, and by the advice of Colonel Ward, from whom, as well as from Mrs. Ward, I received unfailing help and sympathy, I called in Dr. Dane from Sehore, and, at his request, Dr. Hannyngton, Civil Surgeon at Indore, was also summoned.

Knowing the dangerous nature of the disease my daughter had contracted, and that in less than twenty-one days the crisis must come, I determined

THE HAYAT AFZAH GARDEN

to make a final effort to overcome my Mother's anger. Choosing a time in the afternoon when I knew that she would have risen from her *siësta*, I went to the Táj Mahal, and, alighting from my carriage, made my way towards her bedroom, where I found her seated on her prayer-seat. Saláming to her with deep respect, I begged her to forgive whatever fault I had committed, and to return with me to the bedside of my daughter, and help me with her advice in my hour of need. Without vouchsafing any reply, but apparently in great anger, my Mother rose from her seat, and withdrew to the apartment of Sidik Hasan Khán; and though I remained for three hours waiting for her, she did not come to me again. On my return I found my daughter quite unconscious, the fever having increased rapidly during my absence. After a while, however, it abated; and when she had recovered sufficiently to talk to me, I told her how I had been to call her grandmother, and of the failure I had met with. She showed no sign of anger or resentment, and, in the gentlest manner, said to me: "Do not be distressed. You have done all you can. Maulavi Sidik Hasan Khán will never allow her to come here."

The next morning, the Begam sent her Hakím to make inquiries. I allowed him to see the patient, and he at once recognized the gravity of her condition. He returned to the Táj Mahal, and made a full report to Sidik Hasan Khán. The Nawáb thereupon advised him not to acquaint the Begam with the true facts, but to tell her

that her granddaughter was suffering from an attack of ordinary malarious fever. This he did; but my Mother's anxiety was not removed. Again she would have come to us, but she was turned from her purpose at the last moment. She then proposed that Bilkis Jahán and I should be brought to the Táj Mahal, and ordered rooms to be made ready for us. But once more Sidik Hasan Khán intervened. The alarming accounts of the Sáhib-zádi's health might, he said, be a mere trick on my part to gain admission to the palace; and he advised the dispatch of a second messenger to my house to make further inquiries. This time Ahmed Biyah, one of Her Highness's personal attendants, was selected for the purpose, having been previously instructed by Sidik Hasan Khán as to the report she was to bring back. I knew the woman and her character, and I refused to admit her into my house. On her return, she reported to Her Highness that Bilkis Jahán was very much better, and had been seen playing about with her brother Nasrullah Khán. My Mother was completely deceived by this information, and, regarding it as a corroboration of Sidik Hasan Khán's suspicions, set her mind at rest and made no further effort to see either my daughter or myself.

Meanwhile the disease had advanced with rapid strides. We tried every remedy that our poor human skill could devise. But who can stay the hand of Death? On Friday, the 15th of Rabbi-us-sáni, 1305 A.H. (1888 A.D.), the lamp of her life was extinguished, and the doors of Paradise

opened to receive her gentle spirit. I will not attempt to describe our grief. Its heaviness only those will understand who have encountered a like sorrow. It was the will of God, and we submitted to it with whatever patience we could command. As soon as the sad news reached the city, people of all classes came thronging to the Hayat Afzah garden to express their sympathy with us in our distress. The Sáhibzádi's death caused widespread grief. To the people of Bhopál she had been dear, not only on account of her loving and happy disposition, but because they had looked upon her as the future ruler of the State, and one who would secure to them a continuance of those special blessings they had so long enjoyed under a woman's rule. The funeral ceremony was performed by Mufti Muhammad Yahza, and was attended by dense crowds of people, so that the roads to the garden were blocked. Bilkis Jahán Begam was laid to rest beneath the trees on the north side of the garden, where a tomb has been erected to her memory.

All the political officers connected with the State sent us letters of condolence. His Excellency the Viceroy, who had treated my daughter with so much kindness, wrote to me as follows:

"Lady Dufferin and myself are deeply grieved at hearing of the sad loss you have suffered. I know how dearly you loved this child. Let the knowledge that God has taken her comfort you in your distress. The news of her illness filled us with anxiety, and we are greatly shocked at its sad termination."

My daughter's *jágír*, which was worth Rs. 25,000 a year, reverted to the State, and her personal servants, who had attended her from infancy, were pensioned. It might be supposed that the affliction that had come upon us would be the means of breaking down the barrier between my Mother and my family. But this was not the case. Even in the first bitterness of our grief we were not left in peace. New plans for troubling us were devised every day, and our situation, after the death of Bilkis Jahán Begam, grew worse instead of better.

CHAPTER XIV

THE VISIT OF LORD ROBERTS TO BHOPAL—THE DEATH OF SIDIK HASAN KHAN—A CEREMONY.

On February 25th, 1889, Bhopál was visited by Lord Frederick Roberts, Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army. Her Highness received previous notice of this event through a letter from the Political Agent:

"His Excellency," the letter stated, "will be accompanied by Lady Roberts and Miss Roberts, General Ellis, an Aide-de-camp, and Dr. Dane. He will remain for one day in Bhopál, and then proceed to Sehore for two days, passing through Bhopál again on his return journey. Several distinguished military officers wish to take the opportunity of meeting the Commander-in-Chief at Bhopál, and Your Highness will, doubtless, be kind enough to extend your hospitality to them also."

The Political Agent and several military officers came to Bhopál on February 24th, and His Excellency Lord Roberts arrived at 4.30 p.m. on the following day. The Begam was present at the railway station, and, on the arrival of the train, Lord and Lady Roberts and Miss Roberts were

conducted by the Political Agent to the carriage in which she was seated. The guard of honour presented arms as His Excellency alighted, and a salute of seventeen guns was fired from the Fatehgarh fort. After having formally welcomed her visitors to Bhopál, Her Highness returned to her palace, and the First Minister escorted the party to Lál Kothi,[1] the route thither being lined on either side by troops. A state banquet took place in the evening. Her Highness, accompanied by the First Minister, joined her guests at the conclusion of dinner, and distributed *'itr* and *pán* with her own hands. The officers of the Bhopál Battalion were also invited to this dinner, but, as the Battalion was about to be inspected, they were unable to be present. In the morning, Lord Roberts, attended by his Aide-de-camp and the Political Agent, witnessed a parade of the State troops. His Excellency asked the Officer-in-Command, Bakshi Háfiz Muhammad Hasan Khán, C.I.E., many questions concerning the strength and constitution of the Force, and spoke with the officers individually about their length of service, pay, quarters, and other details. Then, riding up to the colours, he asked the Bakshi Sáhib if his men could march past. The necessary orders were at once given, and after this and various other evolutions had been performed, His

[1] This *kothi* is situated in Jahángírábád. It is a spacious and pleasant house, built on European lines. It was commenced in 1886, and completed in three years. The situation is healthy, and the views from the house and garden are remarkably fine. It was constructed under the supervision of Mr. Cook, the State Engineer, at a cost of Rs. 72,878. 3. 6.

FIELD MARSHAL LORD FREDERICK ROBERTS.

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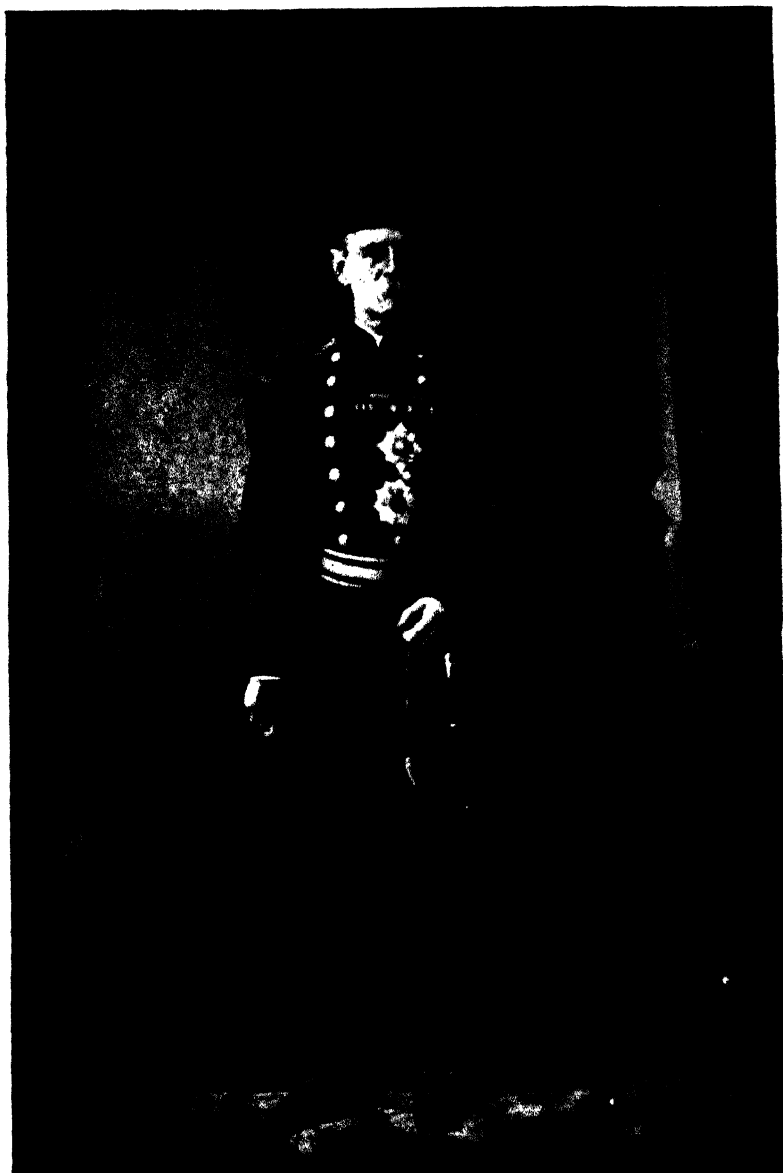
Excellency called out the officers, and congratulated them on the smart appearance of their men, and the precision with which their orders had been obeyed—"in which respect," he said, "your regiment compares favourably with any that I have seen in India."

After the parade, Lord Roberts escorted by the Bakshi Sáhib and Munshi Abdul Ali Khán, Second Judicial Minister, drove to the Táj Mahal to see Her Highness. He then visited the Fatehgarh fort, where he was received with a salute of seventeen guns. Lady Roberts and her daughter, and Mrs. Kincaid, also called upon Her Highness, and later in the day all the guests met in the Nishát Afzah garden, where tea and other refreshments were provided. At 7.30 p.m., Her Highness returned the visits of Their Excellencies at the Lál Kothi, and bade them farewell. According to the programme, Lord Roberts spent the next two days at Sehore, and, returning to Bhopál on February 28th, left in the evening for Ujjain.

The next visitor of distinction whom the State had the honour of welcoming was His Excellency Lord Lansdowne. But before I proceed to the description of this, the first visit of a Viceroy of India to Bhopál, there is another event to be chronicled, an event of considerable moment both to the State and to myself—namely, the death of Sidik Hasan Khán.

After the confiscation of his titles and salute, Sidik Hasan Khán carefully abstained from all open interference in state affairs, for his one ambition was to get his lost honours restored, and

he never ceased urging my Mother to some new effort on his behalf. Her first attempt was a petition, submitted through the Minister of the State, to Lord Dufferin, which met with a peremptory refusal. Her second, the journey to Calcutta, was, as the reader knows, equally unsuccessful. But she was in no way daunted, and scheme after scheme, each as fruitless as the one that preceded it, was devised. How long she would have persevered it is impossible to say, for, in the midst of her endeavours, Sidik Hasan Khán was transferred to a sphere where titles and salutes would stand him in very little stead. He succumbed to an attack of dropsy on the morning of the 2nd Rajab, 1307 A.H. (1890 A.D.). He was buried, by his own desire, in strict conformity with the rites of Islám, though the funeral was a public one, and was conducted with considerable pomp. It was attended by both the Agent to the Governor-General and the Political Agent, and amongst the chief mourners was Sáhibzáda Obaidullah Khán Sáhib, Minister of the State of Tonk.

The exposure of the character and ways of Sidik Hasan Khán was no part of the object with which I undertook the writing of this book. Both on account of the esteem in which he was held by my Mother, and the position which, as her husband, he held in my family, I would gladly have pictured him to my readers in a less disadvantageous light. Moreover, when I think of his rise to power, dramatic alike in its rapidity and its brilliance, and then of the even greater suddenness and com-

pleteness of the Nemesis which overtook him, all feelings, save one of pity, vanished from my heart. But, as I have set myself to tell the story of the Bhopál State, in which public and private matters are so intermingled that it is impossible to separate them, I must record events as they took place, the good and the pleasant with the bad and the unpleasant, only using in respect of the latter such briefness as may be consistent with a connected and truthful narrative.

Sidik Hasan Khán was a native of Kanouj in the district of Farukhábád. He used to say that his grandfather, Syad Aulád Ali Khán, Sáhib Bahádur, Anwar Jang, had been a great noble of Hyderábád, and belonged to the *Shiah* sect; but that his father, by reason of his having become a *Sunni*, was disinherited and forced to leave Hyderábád, and that he settled in Kanouj, and became a religious teacher. Sidik Hasan Khán was educated at Delhi, and came to Bhopál in the reign of Nawáb Sikandar Begam. He was given a subordinate post in the secretariat, and was afterwards placed in charge of the Records Office. In my Mother's reign, he became Superintendent of Education, and, after holding this post for a short time, was promoted to be Mír Munshi, with the titles "Mír Dabi" and "Khán." After his marriage with Her Highness, a *jágir* of Rs. 24,000 was conferred upon him. Her Highness, however, did not consider his titles consistent with his new position, and, after repeated solicitations, prevailed upon the Government of India to confer upon him the same rank as had been held by her

late husband, and he was accordingly made Nawáb Walájah Amír-ul-mulk. Previous to his marriage with my Mother, he had taken to wife the daughter of Munshi Jamál-ud-dín Sáhib, First Minister of the State, thereby connecting himself with an ancient and respected family. Munshi Jamál-ud-dín, who was a wise and learned man, attracted by Sidik Hasan Khán's literary abilities, and particularly by his theological researches, approved of the marriage, and recommended his son-in-law to my Mother for the post of Mír Munshi. The story of his subsequent career is familiar to my readers, and needs no repetition. Bereft of his rank and grandeur, he found himself deserted by many of his former friends and adherents, and his latter days were passed in comparative loneliness. The heaviness of his retribution would seem to indicate sins of no ordinary magnitude; but human judgment is liable to err, and the ways of God are inscrutable. The taint of sin is over us all, and only in His court is there perfect justice.

Death having put an end to my Mother's plans for reinstating her husband, she determined that, although the Government of India had refused to honour him living, respect should, at any rate, be shown to his memory. She, therefore, dispatched a *kharíta* to the Viceroy, begging that in all future correspondence, Sidik Hasan Khán should be referred to as "the late Nawáb and husband of the Ruler." After some deliberation, His Excellency Lord Lansdowne granted this request; and the fact was communicated to Her Highness by

Mr. Henvey, Agent to the Governor-General. His letter was dated October 12th, and was as follows:

"It gives me great pleasure to state that the Government of India has acceded to your Highness's request that your late husband may be referred to in official documents and correspondence as 'the late Nawáb and husband of the Ruler.'"

On receipt of this letter, the Minister was directed to issue a notice to all the heads of departments, and to the nobles and jágírdárs of the State, informing them of the orders of the Government of India, and directing that the same should be observed from that time forward.

It was not long after the death of Nawáb Sidik Hasan Khán, that my second son, Sáhibzáda Muhammad Obaidullah Khán, completed his task of learning by heart the Holy Korán. The work had occupied him three whole years, during which time he received constant assistance from Nawáb Ihtishám-ul-mulk. I need not tell my readers how our hearts rejoiced when we knew that success had crowned his endeavours. His own joy was no less than ours, and we thanked Almighty God that He had vouchsafed to us a son thus capable of winning honour and blessings for himself and his family. We had, indeed, cause to be grateful to Him; for was not our son a Háfiz, and was not this the fulfilment of one of the dearest wishes of our hearts?

Since my Mother's anger had first displayed itself against us, we had abandoned the performance of all ceremonies except such as were strictly

necessary, and even these we conducted with the utmost simplicity. When, however, we considered the long labours our son had undergone, we determined to celebrate his success in as complete a manner as possible. We, accordingly, determined that, during the blessed month of Ramazán, which was then approaching, he should publicly recite the whole Korán, and that none of the demonstrations of joy customary on such occasions should be omitted. There are few events in my life that I recall with greater pleasure. The only cloud on our happiness was the absence of my Mother: and for twenty-seven years I enjoyed no pleasure over which that same cloud did not cast its shadow.

On the first day of the Fast, at the hour of evening prayer, the Sáhibzáda commenced his recitation, and continued it daily at the same hour until, on the twenty-first evening, his pious task was completed. All the members of my family, and every servant from the highest to the lowest belonging to my household, attended night after night to hear him. When the last chapter had been recited, the greatest happiness prevailed, and my son, as well as my husband and myself, received the warmest congratulations. Sweetmeats, rose-water, and *kewara*[1] were distributed, and handsome presents were given to each person who had attended the recitation. The mosque which my family attended for prayer was brilliantly illuminated, and for several nights large numbers of poor people were fed at our expense. To perpetuate

[1] A perfume extracted from the flower of the *kevra* plant (*Pandanus odoratissimus*).

SAHIBZADA COLONEL OBAIDULLAH KHAN

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the date of this happy event, a chronogram stanza of four lines was composed, of which the following is a literal translation:

"Truly, he does an excellent work who commits to memory the Holy Book:
For such are high places reserved in heaven.
Why should not the head of Iblis be cut off?
For the heart of Obaid is become as a guarded talet."[1]

[1] The dates of notable events are often signified in this manner. To every letter in the Persian Alphabet a certain numerical value has been assigned. This is technically known as *abjad*, from the first four letters of the table, *a* = 1, *b* = 2, *j* = 3, *d* = 4. If a couplet or stanza is correctly composed, the value of all the letters contained in it, when added together, give the required date. Should the exact date not result, the excess or defect must be signified in the verse. Thus, the total given by the above-mentioned stanza shows the year *after* the event which it commemorates. The number 1, therefore, has to be subtracted from the result. The third line of the stanza signifies this. The head of Iblis has to be cut off; that is, the first letter of his name, which in Persian is the letter *a*, has to be omitted from the calculation.

CHAPTER XV

THE VISIT OF LORD LANSDOWNE TO BHOPAL

ON October 22nd, 1891, the Honourable Mr. Crosthwaite, Agent to the Governor-General in Central India, informed Her Highness that His Excellency the Viceroy had started on tour from Simla, and intended visiting Bhopál on November 20th, and to remain three days, with the object of meeting Her Highness and the other Chiefs of the Bhopál Agency. Her Highness was greatly pleased at this intelligence, and wrote to His Excellency, thanking him for the honour he was about to confer upon her. Preparations for his entertainment were made on an unusually grand scale. Lord Harris, the Governor of Bombay, and Lady Harris, besides many other European guests, were invited to Bhopál for the occasion; and the native guests included the Chiefs of Rájgarh, Narsinghgarh, Khilchipúr, Kurwái, Basoda, Pathári, Muhammad-garh, Dhábla Dhamar, Dhábla Ghosi, Dariakéri, and Rámgarh.

On the 20th, the greatest excitement and enthusiasm prevailed in the city, and as the hour of His Excellency's arrival approached, the populace gathered in crowds at every spot from which a

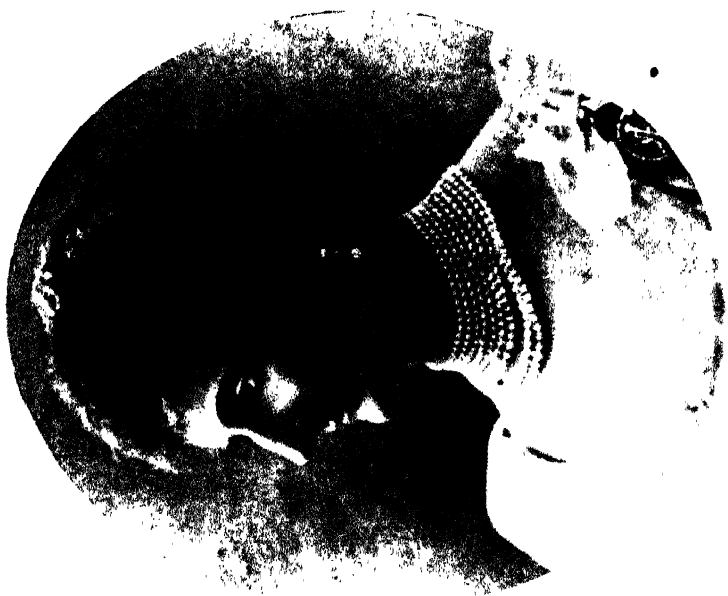
view of the great man might be obtained. The roads from the railway station to the Lál Kothi, and from the lower lake to the palace in Shahjahánábád, were elaborately decorated. Triumphal arches and floral gateways were erected along their entire lengths, and the sky itself was almost hidden by festoons of flowers and bunting. In front of the barracks in Jahángírábád the road was spanned by an enormous arch formed of ancient and modern weapons of warfare, cunningly arranged in floral devices. Another arch, in front of the Táj Mahal, was composed entirely of glass mirrors, on which were painted flowers and fruit of every imaginable colour. From this arch to the gateway of the palace the ground on either side of the road was laid out in flower-beds, backed by towering masses of palms, ferns, and foliage plants. The beautiful grounds of the Lál Kothi were illuminated each evening; and as the house barely afforded sufficient accommodation for the large number of guests, a large *shamiána*, of cloth of gold, was set up on the lawn, and furnished as a drawing-room. Much trouble had been taken in planning and carrying out these arrangements, and the result amply proved Her Highness's desire to accord to the representative of Her Majesty the Queen a loyal and magnificent welcome.

At 5 o'clock in the evening, Her Highness drove in full State to the railway station. The road on either side was lined with troops, and the State artillery was posted on the west side of the line opposite to the platform. The station gateway was flanked by two rows of elephants, resplendent

in scarlet *jhools*, and bearing on their backs silver howdahs. As His Excellency's special train steamed into the station, the artillery fired a salute of thirty-one guns, and the band played the National Anthem. Her Highness advanced to the door of the railway carriage to welcome her guests, and escorted them to her private waiting-room. After a formal exchange of greetings, the following had the honour of being presented to His Excellency: the First Minister of the State, Mián Alamgír Muhammad Khán, Mián Sadar Muhammad Khán, Mián Núr-ul-hasan Khán, and Mián Abdul Hai Khán. Lord and Lady Lansdowne then took their seats in a carriage drawn by four horses, and drove off from the station. Her Highness's carriage, also drawn by four horses, came next, the remainder of the party following in procession. On reaching the lower lake, Her Highness left the procession and returned to her palace.

On the next day, at 11 o'clock in the morning, Her Highness, accompanied by eleven Sirdars, paid a State visit to the Viceroy. She was accorded a private interview, at the conclusion of which she presented her *nazar*. The eleven Sirdars were then introduced, and each in turn presented his *nazar*. Before leaving, Her Highness was conducted to another apartment, where she was received by Lady Lansdowne and other ladies. At 5.30 p.m., His Excellency received visits from Mián Alamgír Muhammad Khán, Háfiz Bakshi Muhammad Hasan Khán, C.I.E., Commander-in-Chief of the Bhopál Army, and the Assistant Revenue Minister. At 6 p.m., according to the

THE MARQUIS OF LANSDOWNE

THE MARCHIONESS OF LANSDOWNE.

programme, he returned Her Highness's visit at the Táj Mahal, expressing, as he drove along, his keen appreciation of the manner in which his route to the palace had been decorated. He was received at the outer gate by the Political Agent and the First Minister, and at the inner gate by Her Highness in person. The following fourteen Sirdars were present at this Durbar: Munshi Syad Imtiyáz Ali, First Minister; Mián Alamgír Muhammad Khán; Mián Sadar Muhammad Khán; Mián Núr-ul-hasan Khán; Mián Ali Hasan Khán; Mián Akil Muhammad Khán; Mián Nazír Muhammad Khán; Mián Abdul Hai Khán; Mír Bakshi Sáhib Bahádur, Nasrat-i-jang; Mián Akbar Muhammad Khán; Munshi Abdul Ali Khán, Mohtamim of the Daftar Huzúr; Munshi Hakím-ud-dín, Mír Munshi; Munshi Ahmad Hasan Khán, State Vakíl; and the Assistant Revenue Minister. The proceedings were of a strictly formal character, and terminated with the distribution of *'itr* and *pán*, His Excellency, the Foreign Secretary, and the Agent to the Governor-General receiving it from the hands of Her Highness, and the remainder from the First Minister.

In the evening, a state banquet was given at the Lál Kothi. The health of the Viceroy was proposed by Her Highness in person, who spoke as follows:

"Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I have no words to express either the pleasure which it gives me to welcome to Bhopál His Excellency the Governor-General of India and Lady Lansdowne, or the gratitude I feel for the

honour which their visit has conferred upon me and upon my State. I heartily thank Their Excellencies and my other guests for the kindness they have done me in accepting my poor hospitality. I have long cherished the hope that the unbroken loyalty which, from the earliest days of its history, this State has always displayed towards the British Government, and my own endeavours, since the time of my accession, to live up to the traditions of my ancestors, would procure me the honour which His Excellency has now conferred upon me, the honour of welcoming within my territories the representative of Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen-Empress.

"Unfortunately, the means of communication between my State and the outside world have, until recently, been such as to render a journey to Bhopál a long and tedious undertaking. But that my hopes have been deferred by this or by whatsoever cause, only makes me appreciate more fully their realization to-day. And I can assure Lord Lansdowne that the 21st of November, 1891, will always be regarded by me as one of the happiest days of my life, and one of the most important in the history of Bhopál. Since His Excellency's appointment to the high office of Viceroy of India, the greatest sympathy and consideration have characterized all his dealings with this State. To him, and to the Government of which he is the head, I am deeply grateful, and I beg that, when the opportunity may be forthcoming, he will assure her Majesty the Queen of my loyalty and devotion, and of my readiness to expend not only my utmost means, but my life itself, in her service."

Her Highness's speech was greeted with loud applause; and, the toast having been duly

honoured, His Excellency rose and made the following reply:

"Your Highness, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I am deeply sensible of the honour which Her Highness the Begam has done me, an honour which possesses the greater value in my eyes because I believe I am the first Viceroy who has had the advantage of being received as Her Highness's guest in Bhopál. I appreciate Her Highness's kindness the more because she is still suffering from a severe domestic affliction, and it must have cost her an effort to emerge from her retirement; but I feel sure that upon this, as upon other occasions, Her Highness would allow no private feelings of her own to prevent her from manifesting, by word and by deed, the respect for Her Majesty the Queen-Empress which she has expressed in such eloquent and earnest words. I shall not fail to make known to Her Majesty the manner in which Her Highness has referred to her this evening. As for myself, it is a source of the greatest satisfaction to me to hear from Her Highness's own lips that I have, in her opinion, treated the different questions connected with the State of Bhopál which have come before me with that consideration to which Her Highness is entitled; and I can promise her that my friendly respect for her will be, if possible, strengthened by the manner in which she has received me on this interesting occasion. The Rulers of Bhopál have always been conspicuous for their loyalty, their administrative ability, and their magnificent charity. The services rendered to the British Government by the Mother of Her Highness, the Sikandar Begam, during the Mutiny, when such services were most needed, are not and can never be forgotten. Her Highness, the present Ruler of the State, is a worthy inheritor of those

traditions; she has shown herself to be a wise and sagacious Ruler, and she has contributed largely towards the welfare of the State by her generous support of many good and useful works. She has assisted liberally in the development of the railway system of this part of India, she has constructed roads, built hospitals, secured for the people of Bhopál an invariable supply of good water, and, only to-day, she has intimated to me her desire that the Government of India should take advantage of an offer which she had made some time ago, to place a part of the military forces of the State at the disposal of the Government for the purpose of Imperial defence. Ladies and gentlemen, I ask you to join with me in drinking Her Highness's health, and in expressing the hope that any trouble or anxiety which she may have had may in time pass away and be forgotten, and that she may long be spared to continue a reign which has been fruitful of good to the people of her State, and which has merited the support and approbation of the Government of India.

The next evening, the Táj Mahal and the adjoining lake were illuminated. Much thought and labour had been expended on this feature of the programme; it was executed with great skill, and proved a complete success. Thousands of coloured lights flashed from every part of the great palace, thousands more illuminated the margin of the lake, varied at intervals with cascades and fountains of fire, and weird and fantastic boats, birds, dragons, and fishes, like jewelled shapes from fairy-land, floated hither and thither over the surface of the water, in which the entire scene was reflected with dazzling brilliancy. The spectators were accom-

modated on the roof of the Dil Kusha palace, and were greatly delighted with this unique entertainment. Lady Lansdowne, as she bade Her Highness good-night, said that she had not seen in any Native State a more brilliant and effective display.

On November 22nd, His Excellency visited the Buddhist remains at Sánchi, and on his return inspected the Prince of Wales's Hospital, the Zenana Hospital, the Fatehgarh Fort, and the Bala Kila. The same day her Highness called at the Lál Kothi to bid His Excellency farewell. The visit was returned by Lady Lansdowne at the Bahar Afzah palace. I also called at the Lál Kothi the same day. My husband and my two sons accompanied me, and we were received by His Excellency with great cordiality. After a short conversation, an Aide-de-camp was sent to inform Lady Lansdowne of our visit. Her Excellency came at once to see us. She talked to us in the pleasantest manner, telling us how much she had enjoyed the illuminations and other incidents of her visit to Bhopál. We then received *'itr* and *pán* from Lord Lansdowne, and took our departure. In the evening His Excellency and party left by special train for Indore.

On the occasion of this visit, the Viceroy conferred a special honour upon the State by exempting its ruler from that time forward from the obligation of presenting a *nazar*, and a proclamation to that effect was issued by the Government of India. That Her Highness's loyal welcome and hospitality were fully appreciated by Lord Lansdowne is manifest from the following extract from a speech

delivered by him at the Town Hall, Calcutta, at the close of his tour:

"In the course of my tour, I visited no less than four Chiefs, and it would be ingratitude on my part if I did not acknowledge the warmth of the reception I met with at their hands, and if I did not bear testimony to the spirit of loyalty by which they were animated. I had the pleasure of visiting Her Highness the Begam of Bhopál, and I was astonished at her enlightenment, prudence, and ability. The loyalty of the State is proved both by its traditions and its history, and the Begam herself has always been a true friend and firm supporter of the English Throne. In spite of a private sorrow, which at the time of my visit was weighing heavily upon her, her cordial and friendly welcome is something I shall not easily forget."

When the programme of His Excellency's tour for 1892 was published, it was seen that he would pass through the Bhopál railway station on October 28th. Her Highness, thereupon, through the Agent to the Governor-General, invited Their Excellencies and party to accept her hospitality on that day. The invitation was gratefully accepted, and a grand dinner was arranged in a pavilion at the station. Their Excellencies arrived by special train at 8 p.m., and, after dinner had been partaken of, Her Highness, who had watched the proceedings from an adjoining tent, entered the pavilion, and in a brief speech proposed the health of her guests. Her Highness's words were loudly cheered, and after the toast had been drunk His Excellency rose and said:

* "Ladies and Gentlemen,—I cannot sufficiently thank Her Highness for the very kind words in which she has proposed my health and that of Lady Lansdowne. For a second time we have the great pleasure of enjoying the hospitality of Bhopál. The previous occasion was twelve months ago. It was one that I shall never forget, and I am quite sure it will never be forgotten by those who accompanied me. Since I came to India, nothing has left a deeper impression on my mind than the eloquent and sincere manner in which Her Highness, at the conclusion of the State banquet, expressed her devotion to the Government of India, and her loyalty to Her Majesty the Queen. In accordance with the promise I then made, I communicated these sentiments to Her Majesty, by whom they were very highly appreciated. For Her Highness's kindness to us to-day we feel especially grateful. Our route happens to take us through the State of Bhopál, but it is not possible for us to break our journey. Notwithstanding this, Her Highness was no sooner informed that we should reach Bhopál this evening than she invited us to alight, if only for a few minutes, and partake once more of her hospitality.

"Thus again is Her Highness's loyalty publicly manifested: and I can assure her, though I am confident that no such assurance from me is necessary, that there is no Chief in India on whose loyalty the British Government places more reliance than on that of the Begam of Bhopál. And if ever that Government can be of service to her it will always be a pleasure to me to see that its assistance and support are forthcoming.

"Ladies and gentlemen, I ask you to join me in drinking to the health of Her Highness the Begam, with every good wish for the happiness of her life and the welfare of her State."

CHAPTER XVI

THE LADY LANSDOWNE HOSPITAL—A STEAM FACTORY—THE BHOPAL IMPERIAL SERVICE LANCERS

Of the many works of public utility which the State owes to Nawáb Shah Jahán Begam, none has conferred a more lasting benefit on the people than the Lady Lansdowne Hospital, which was built in memory of the visit of Lord and Lady Lansdowne, described in the last chapter. Her Highness had special reasons for being grateful to His Excellency, for he had done all that lay in his power, consistent with the policy of the Government, to console her for the unhappiness which the degradation of Sidik Hasan Khán had caused her. Having granted her request regarding her late husband's title, he came himself to Bhopál, thus conferring upon her the honour of being the first ruler of the State to entertain the representative of the Sovereign of the Empire; and to mark his favour still further he exempted her, and all future rulers of the State, from the obligation of presenting *nazarána.* To show her gratitude for these favours and privileges, my Mother determined to found an institution which,

while being of permanent benefit to her people, should serve to keep alive in their minds the memory of a Viceroy to whom the State was so deeply indebted.

There was at this time in Bhopál no hospital worthy of the name for the treatment of *purdah* women. Lady Lansdowne had herself spoken of the need of such an institution, and it was, therefore, decided that no memorial would be more suitable, or more generally appreciated, than one which supplied this want. The site selected was a piece of ground close to the lower lake, on the north side of the road leading to the railway station. Plans and estimates were quickly prepared and sanctioned, and in a little more than a year the building was completed. By Her Excellency's permission it was named "The Lady Lansdowne Hospital for Women." It is a well-designed and handsome edifice, possessing abundant accommodation.[1] The opening ceremony was performed by Major Meade, the Political Agent, on May 26th, 1892, the anniversary of Her Majesty the Queen's accession. Besides Her Highness and the Political Agent, there were present the First Minister, Nawáb Munnawar Ali Khán, Chief of Kurwai, the leading nobles and Jágírdárs of the State, and the Vakíls from many other States in the Agency. Major Meade opened the proceedings by reading a congratulatory *kharíta* addressed to Her Highness by the Viceroy. Her Highness

[1] Children of both sexes are admitted to this hospital, and instruction is given in midwifery.

then addressed the assembly, and having explained the origin and object of the Hospital, concluded her speech with these words:

"I regard it as a most happy circumstance that we are holding this opening ceremony on the anniversary of Her Most Gracious Majesty's accession. I am very grateful to Her Excellency Lady Lansdowne for the interest she has taken in this institution, and for her kindness in permitting it to be named the Lady Lansdowne Hospital. I request Major Meade to open the Hospital, and I trust it may prove a permanent boon to the people of Bhopál."

The opening ceremony then took place, and Major Meade made a short speech describing the accommodation of the building, and the general arrangements for its supervision and management. After this *'itr* and *pán* were distributed, and the meeting dispersed.

Later in the day, a durbar in honour of the Queen's accession was held, and a salute of a hundred and one guns was fired. In the evening, the State troops gave an assault-at-arms, which was witnessed by a large crowd of spectators. The day's rejoicings were brought to an end by a banquet at the Lál Kothi, at which Her Highness proposed the health of the Queen-Empress.

Another building opened by Major Meade in the same year, 1892, was the steam factory in Shahjahánábád. It had been commenced as far back as the year 1882, a sum of Rs.7,00,000 having been sanctioned for its construction. No steam machinery of any kind yet existed in the State,

and Her Highness believed that the factory would be a source of considerable profit, and would at the same time afford employment to a large number of work-people. It took nine years to complete, and was opened in 1810 A.H., in the presence of a large gathering of nobles, State officials, and merchants. It is situated in the eastern part of Shahjahánábád, and is surrounded by an extensive compound containing go-downs, and a *kothi* for the manager. Munshi Imtiyáz Ali must have found the erection of this factory an undertaking of considerable profit. The building may have cost as much as two lákhs of rupees, possibly a good deal less; the engine was purchased for Rs. 50,000. The furniture ordered for the *kothi* was suitable for a palace. Whether it was ever placed in the *kothi* or not I cannot say; it is not there now, nor is there any trace of it either in the *kár-khána* or the *ferásh-khána*. In the busy season—that is, from December to May—nearly two hundred hands are employed in the factory, and the engine, when working at full pressure (50 horse-power), drives sixty different machines. Of these, the large majority are for cleaning and pressing cotton, and the remainder for sawing timber, grinding grain, and weighing and pressing grass. The cotton comes from all parts of the State, and after being cleaned and made up into bales is exported to Bombay.

The period of Lord Lansdowne's viceroyalty was drawing to a close, and Her Highness, being anxious to bid him farewell before his departure for England, determined to visit Simla for this

purpose. Accordingly she instructed Munshi Imtiyáz Ali, the State Minister, to inform the Political Agent of her intention, and to request him to accompany her and to arrange the preliminary formalities. In reply to the Minister's letter, the Political Agent stated that the proper course was for Her Highness, first of all, to inform His Excellency of her desire to visit him. A *kharíta* was therefore dispatched through the Agent to the Governor-General for Central India, and on December 5th, 1893 (23rd Safar, 1311 A.H.), through the same source, the following reply was received:

"It will give Lady Lansdowne and myself great pleasure to see you again before we leave India. It will be most convenient for me if you can come on or about the 23rd of September, as it is my intention to leave Simla for some days on the 29th."

On receipt of this reply, Her Highness completed the preparations for her journey, and on September 21st left by special train for Simla, being accompanied by eight Sirdars, Munshi Imtiyáz Ali Khán, Hakím Muaz-ud-dín, Chief Medical Officer, and a hundred and one attendants and servants. Kalka was reached on September 24th, and Simla on the following day. Three miles outside the city Her Highness was met by two Aides-de-camp and a military escort, and a salute of nineteen guns was fired as she entered the city. She drove at once to the *kothi* which had been engaged for her reception. Here two more Aides-

de-camp waited upon Her Highness, and informed her that His Excellency would be pleased to receive her visit at 2.25 p.m. At 2.13 p.m., Her Highness, accompanied by the Political Agent, the Minister of the State, and six Sirdars, set out for Viceregal Lodge. She was received by His Excellency with every mark of kindness. In accordance with the recent proclamation, Her Highness did not present a *nazar*, but the formality was observed by the members of her retinue.

On September 27th, His Excellency paid a return visit. The Minister, with Mián Alamgír Muhammad Khán, Mián Nazír Muhammad Khán, and Mián Akil Muhammad Khán, escorted him from Viceregal Lodge, and a guard of honour was drawn up in front of the *kothi*. The visit was conducted in accordance with a previously arranged programme, and terminated with the usual distribution of *'itr* and *pán*. During her stay in Simla, Lady Lansdowne showed my Mother much kind attention, and on one occasion honoured her by accepting an invitation to luncheon. Her Highness had also the honour of meeting His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief and the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab. Before her departure, she visited many places of interest in and about Simla, and also attended the Simla races. On the return journey, she halted at Lahore, Delhi, and Agra, and reached Bhopál on the 1st of Jamádi-ul-awwal, 1311 A.H.

Another important feature of Her Highness's reign, and belonging to the period we have now reached, was the establishment of the Imperial Service regiment. In 1885, when Russia made

an attack on Punjdeh, it was generally believed that the British Government would be forced to declare war, and many of the ruling Chiefs requested the Viceroy, Lord Dufferin, in the event of a campaign against Russia, to permit the troops of their States to take the field. War was, however, averted, and the Government had no opportunity of complying with this request. Lord Dufferin was succeeded by Lord Lansdowne, and during the latter's Viceroyalty the question of the formation of an Imperial Service Force was again brought forward; and it was decided that any ruling Chief who wished to do so should maintain a body of troops, trained and equipped according to the regulations of the Indian Army, and that these troops should be inspected by British officers, and should be called upon to take the field should the need for their services arise. Her Highness at once declared her desire to maintain a regiment of cavalry; and at her request Captain G. Edwards, who had been appointed Inspecting Officer for Central India, was sent to Bhopál to arrange the necessary details. The estimate prepared by him for the formation and upkeep of the regiment was as follows:

For uniforms, transport, and hospital	Rs. 125,000
For building lines	Rs. 100,000
For maintenance, a monthly sum of	Rs. 16,986

This estimate provided for the enrolment of 900 persons, as follows:

Officers and sowars	500
Syces	283
Menial servants	74
Hospital Staff	11
Dhobies, barbers, etc.	32
Total	900

As the Bhopál State still used its own coinage, it was provided that, in the event of the regiment being called upon for Imperial service, officers and men should be paid in the coin of British India, without any deduction being made.

Her Highness approved of the estimate, and proposed to Captain Edwards to transfer to the new regiment all the men of the State army who belonged to the old fighting families of Bhopál, as they were likely to make good soldiers, and would welcome a life alike congenial to their inclinations and in accord with the traditions of their race. This proposal Captain Edwards agreed to; and 138 men, officers and *sowars*, were selected from the State army, and formed the nucleus of the Imperial Service regiment. Forty-two other *sowars* were recruited at the same time, and two writers and twenty-two menial servants were engaged. Major Hasan-ud-dín Khán, a Risáldár from the Hyderábád Contingent, was placed in command; and thus, with a complement of 205 persons, the Bhopál Victoria Lancers, as the regiment is now called, came into being. The fact was announced to the Government of India, and, in acknowledgment, a *kharíta* was received from His Excellency the Viceroy:

SIMLA, *May 15th*, 1894 (1312 A.H.).

'MY DEAR FRIEND,

Some years have passed since the proposal to utilize a portion of the armies of Native States for the purposes of defence first came before the Government of India. The part you have taken in furthering that proposal is an additional mani-

festation of the loyalty and devotion to the British Government for which your State has so long been famous. It is, I know, your desire that the regiment of cavalry maintained by you should be thoroughly efficient, and ready, at any time when their services may be required, to take the field with the regular Forces of the Empire. The Government of India is deeply concerned in all matters affecting friendly States and their rulers; and the reports submitted by the Inspector-General of Imperial Service Troops have been perused with attention and pleasure. I am desired by Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India to inform you that the vigorous efforts made by the Chiefs of India for the success of this movement have afforded him much gratification. The Government is fully confident that the regiment that you are raising in Bhopál will be completed in the same admirable fashion in which its formation has been commenced. It will, I am sure, give you great pleasure to hear that the co-operation of the Native States in the work of forming an Imperial Service Force has been sincerely appreciated by Her Majesty Queen Victoria, and I am desired to convey to you, and to other Rulers, Her Majesty's gratitude."

At the same time, it was made known to Her Highness, through the Political Agent, that the Government of India had decided that the Imperial Service Troops were to be considered of the same standing, to serve under the same conditions, and to enjoy the same privileges as the native Indian army.

Not long after the formation of the regiment, Major Hasan-ud-dín was succeeded by Major Karím

OFFICERS OF THE BHOPAL VICTORIA LANCERS

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Beg, also of the Hyderábád Contingent. Under this officer a marked and rapid improvement took place in the strength, discipline, and efficiency of the regiment. Her Highness was most liberal in supplying funds, every expenditure that was recommended being speedily and willingly sanctioned.

A regiment of cavalry is a costly thing to maintain. But there is no doubt that, had due economy been observed, the State might have been spared a great deal of expense without sacrificing efficiency. But outside the regiment Her Highness had no military advisers, and the senior officers, being all strangers to Bhopál, were not the men to study the financial needs of the regiment in their relation to the financial needs of the State. The military department has since been entirely remodelled, as will appear later on. But it is still a matter for regret that so few of the natives of Bhopál are to be found in the ranks of the Victoria Lancers. Troop and squadron commanders naturally like to see vacancies filled up by their own countrymen: and as long as these officers have to be imported from outside, it is unlikely that the *personnel* of the force will undergo much change.

CHAPTER XVII

THE DEATH OF SAHIBZADI ASIF JAHAN BEGAM

When Sáhibzádi Asif Jahán Begam was only twelve years old, she was attacked by rheumatic fever. At the commencement of her illness, she was attended by Hakím Núr-ul-hasan, who was formerly a servant of my *deorhi*, but had since been appointed Chief Medical Officer of the State. After a short time, as her condition grew worse, Doctor Joshi, Assistant Surgeon, was also summoned. The Sáhibzádi was suffering great pain in her chest, and it was the opinion of both doctors that the rheumatism had begun to affect the heart. When another week's treatment brought no relief, Hakím Abdul Majíd Khán was summoned from Delhi; but, owing to the death of his father, he was obliged to return at the end of a week. His fee was a thousand rupees a day, and, as his treatment proved ineffectual, he was not recalled. Doctor Abdul Rahím Sáhib, a man of considerable reputation, was then sent for from Lucknow. His fee was five hundred rupees a day, and he treated my daughter for nearly two months. His diagnosis confirmed the opinion of the other doctors, but his treatment was more beneficial,

and his medicines afforded the patient considerable relief. The pain came on only at intervals, and was severe twice in the day and twice in the night for about fifteen minutes. It was a time of great anxiety for me and for Nawáb Ihtishám-ul-mulk, and for many days and nights we scarcely slept at all. Gradually, however, an improvement took place, and after she had been in the hands of Doctor Abdul Rahím Sáhib for two months, the pain had almost entirely left her. My husband and I were greatly comforted, and the doctor told us that the humming noise of the heart, which the other doctors had also noticed, would probably never cease, but that he did not consider it an alarming symptom so long as the patient remained unmarried—a warning which we determined we would never neglect, for the life and health of our child was above all other considerations. When Doctor Abdul Rahím Sáhib returned to Lucknow, he received a present of two thousand rupees in addition to his daily fee. His treatment was continued by Miss Mackenzie, a lady doctor of high qualifications and great nobility of character, and she was ably assisted by Doctor Joshi.

It was just at this time, that my Mother's displeasure was at its height. We were not allowed to hold any direct communication with her, and any request that we wished to make had to be forwarded through the Minister, and in this manner I had obtained permission to avail myself of the services of Miss Mackenzie and Doctor Joshi, so long as my daughter's illness continued.

We were, therefore, well off as far as medical aid was concerned. After Miss Mackenzie had watched her patient for some time, she advised a change of climate, and asked me to take her to some place where the air was purer and more invigorating than in Bhopál. I, therefore, decided to remove her to Samarda, a healthy and bracing spot, where my husband had built himself a shooting-box. My Mother's permission was obtained, and the plan was carried into effect. Miss Mackenzie was unable to accompany us, but she continued to advise us by letter, and to send us all the medicines we needed.

The change of air and the treatment combined produced a beneficial effect, and my daughter began rapidly to regain strength. The symptoms of her disease were, however, still apparent, and the absence of the daily supervision of a skilled doctor inclined me not to prolong our stay at Samarda. Miss Mackenzie, in her letters, strongly advised us to try the effect of sea air, and the Nawáb Sáhib and I formed the plan of taking our daughter to Bombay. My Mother gave her sanction (for without this we could not set foot outside Bhopál), and also gave me permission to write to Major Meade and inform him of our plans, and to request him to obtain sanction from the Government of India for an English officer to accompany us. In reply to my letter, Major Meade wrote that he believed the Government would have no objection to granting my request, which he had forwarded to Mr. Crosthwaite, Agent to the Governor-General. In a subsequent letter

he communicated to us the name of the officer who was to accompany us and the date of his arrival. I, therefore, made preparations for his reception at Samarda, and at the same time arranged all the details of our journey to Bombay, my Agent being sent on in advance to engage a house. No officer arrived on the date fixed, but instead, a few days later, a letter came from the Agent to the Governor-General, stating that the Government was unable to accede to my request for the services of a European officer, as this was a privilege only granted to ruling Chiefs. In these circumstances, we decided to abandon altogether our plan of going to Bombay, and, after having been three months at Samarda, we returned to Bhopál.

In a very short time, my daughter's condition again became alarming, and she grew even weaker than she had been before. We therefore returned once more to Samarda, and this time my anxiety was greatly increased by the departure of Miss Mackenzie from Bhopál. She had been acting for Miss Neibel, and on the latter's return to duty, she went to Alwar, where she was given a permanent appointment. The people amongst whom Miss Mackenzie works are indeed fortunate. Her mere presence gives her patients fresh life, and her unremitting attention and her womanly sympathy turn despair into confidence and hope. I never think of Asif Jahán Begam without calling to mind Miss Mackenzie's affectionate care of her. She would sit for hours by her little patient's bedside, and with pleasant stories charm away her pains, and bring

happy smiles to her face. I think her presence comforted me almost as much as it did my child.

This time we were two months at Samarda, but the change did not benefit my daughter as much as on the previous occasion. Doctor Muhammad Syad, my own private medical adviser, was with us, and by his advice we once more returned to Bhopál, and immediately on our arrival sent for Miss Neibel. This lady was in every way a contrast to Miss Mackenzie; she was neither courteous in her manner nor attentive in her treatment. The disease steadily advanced, and for a week Asif Jahán Begam took no nourishment, any attempt to do so being followed by violent sickness. When Miss Neibel's opinion was asked, she said that she could discover no specific disease from which my daughter was suffering, and, as far as she could see, there was nothing serious the matter. And yet it was plain that death was near. Doctor Joshi was again called in, and, as soon as he approached the invalid's bedside, he pronounced the case hopeless.

It was on a Saturday that her condition became desperate. On the Sunday morning, Major Meade called to make inquiries, and to offer his sympathy. On hearing Doctor Joshi's report he was greatly shocked. Major Meade was more than Political Agent; he was a true and kind friend to me and my family. It was the continuation of a friendship which had been commenced by his father, who had been Agent to the Governor-General in the time of Nawáb Sikandar Begam, and on whose advice and assistance my Grandmother used to set the highest

value. By my invitation, Major Meade entered the sick chamber, and spoke words of sympathy and comfort to Asif Jahán Begam. She was quite conscious at the time, but it was easy to see that she was sinking. She lived on till 4 o'clock the next afternoon, and then darkness took possession of my heart, for the light of her love and her goodness had ceased to shine. On the day of her death, the 18th of Muharram, 1312 A.H., she had reached the age of 14 years 4 months and 22 days.

We are God's, and unto Him shall we surely return.[1]

Since the death of our beloved elder daughter, Asif Jahán Begam had been our main consolation and comfort. And now that she too was taken away, the burden of our grief seemed almost more than we could bear. To my Mother we looked in vain for comfort. That she felt deep sorrow I cannot doubt; but she bore it as we had to bear ours—alone. Her displeasure added greatly to our gloom, and the presence of our two sons was our only ray of light; for of our other relations, not a single one came near us. I must not, however, forget the kindness which was displayed towards us by many officers of the Government: the letters of sympathy we received from them were to us a real source of courage and consolation.

But though our earthly comforters were few, God did not abandon us. He gave us strength and patience, and we bowed ourselves in submission to His will. The funeral took place in the Hayat Afzah garden; and, although we had given

[1] Sale's translation of the Koran.

no notice of the hour, and had invited no one to attend the ceremony, a large crowd of people joined the procession as soon as it left the Sadar Manzil. A peculiar sadness always attaches itself to the death of the young, and my double bereavement evoked genuine and widespread sympathy among the people of Bhopál. On the day of the funeral, an order was issued by the Minister for the closing of all public offices and places of business, but the order was countermanded, as it did not meet with the approval of Her Highness.

Sáhibzádi Asif Jahán Begam was a pious and sweet-tempered girl. During her long illness of two and a quarter years, she never omitted her daily prayers, and on each occasion she kept the fast of Ramazán for half the month. In addition to her religious exercises, she had learnt to write Urdu, and had commenced to study English and Persian. She loved her parents and brothers deeply, and was never truly happy unless she saw that they were happy too. Her cheerful and affectionate disposition won for her the love of every member of the household, and her untimely death will ever be lamented.

I have said that God remembered me in my affliction. Let me, then, close this chapter by telling of the special manifestation of His goodness and mercy which was vouchsafed to me.

On the 8th of the month Rabbi-ul-awwal (September 9th, 1894, A.D.), I gave birth to my youngest son, Sáhibzáda Hamidullah Khán. My Mother did not visit me on the occasion, nor were there any demonstrations of joy on the part of the

SAHIBZADI ASIF JAHAN BEGAM.

State. The necessary religious ceremonies I performed in a simple manner in my own house, and when the *akika* ceremony took place, I myself selected the name Muhammad Hamidullah Khán. My own joy at the birth of this child was unbounded. For since the death of Asíf Jahán Begam, I had been depressed and melancholy, and there seemed to be no pleasure for me in life any more. How welcome, then, was this timely gift from God, which, straightway, put new vigour into my heart, and new joy into my life. I felt as the withered and parched grass of the desert must feel when, after long months of drought, it is again watered by the blessed rain from heaven; and I looked upon this child as an angel of mercy sent by the Great Consoler of human hearts, to minister to me in my time of need, and to be to me in the place of those two whom He had seen fit to take away.

CHAPTER XVIII

VISIT OF LORD ELGIN TO BHOPAL—IMTIYAZ ALI KHAN—EXTENSION OF THE BHOPAL STATE RAILWAY

On October 12th, 1895, the Political Agent sent information that Lord Elgin, accompanied by Lady Elgin and his Staff, would visit Bhopál on November 4th, arriving at 9 a.m., and departing the following evening at 11 p.m. The preparations for his reception and entertainment were similar to those which had been made on the occasion of the visit of Lord Lansdowne. The leading Chiefs of the Agency were invited to meet His Excellency, besides a large company of English ladies and gentlemen. The Foreign Secretary and the Political Agent arranged the programme, all the details of which were carefully carried out.

His Excellency was received at the railway station by Her Highness, the Agent to the Governor-General, the Political Agent, the Chiefs of the Agency, together with the European guests and the high officials of the State, and a guard of honour was drawn up on the platform. On the arrival of the train, Her Highness came out from her waiting-room and welcomed Their Excellencies

as they alighted. At the same time, the guard of honour presented arms, and a salute of thirty-one guns was fired by the State artillery. The Viceregal party drove at once to the Lál Kothi, escorted by a detachment of the Imperial Service Lancers. At 11 o'clock, the Minister, Mián Alamgír Muhammad Khán, Mián Sadar Muhammad Khán, and Mián Núr-ul-hasan went to the Lál Kothi to make the *mizáj pursi.* They were received by the Foreign Secretary and the Military Secretary, who presented them with *'itr* and *pán*, and informed them that the Viceroy would be ready to receive Her Highness at 12 o'clock.

At 11.15, the Military Secretary, the Under-Secretary, and an Aide-de-camp drove to the Táj Mahal to escort Her Highness to the Lál Kothi. They were met by the Political Agent, and on being informed by him that Her Highness was ready, the whole party returned forthwith to the Kothi, reaching there punctually at noon. As Her Highness's carriage approached, a salute of twenty-one guns was fired. An Aide-de-camp received her at the door of her carriage, and the Foreign Secretary at the foot of the steps leading to the entrance, the guard of honour drawn up on either side presenting arms. As she mounted the steps, His Excellency advanced to meet her, and, leading her into the drawing-room, seated her in a chair on the right-hand side of his own. The Political Agent then introduced the Minister, Mián Alamgír Muhammad Khán, and the other nobles by whom Her Highness was accompanied. Each of them presented his *nazar*, which His Excellency touched

and returned. After a brief conversation, *'itr* and *pán*, were distributed, Her Highness receiving it from the hands of His Excellency, and the others from the Foreign Secretary. Her Highness then paid a short visit to Her Excellency Lady Elgin in a separate apartment, after which she returned to the Táj Mahal, her departure being as ceremonious as her arrival.

The same day, His Excellency received visits from the Chiefs of Rájgarh, Narsinghgarh, and other States of the Agency, and in the evening paid a return visit to Her Highness. He was accompanied by his Secretaries and Staff in full uniform, and was escorted from the Lál Kothi by the Minister, the chief Sirdars of the State, and a squadron of the Imperial Service Lancers. The State troops formed the guard of honour, and presented arms as His Excellency drove up to the outer gateway of the palace. A salute of thirty-one guns was again fired. Her Highness, supported by the Political Agent, received her visitors at the inner gateway and conducted them to the durbar hall. His Excellency sat at Her Highness's right hand, with the members of his Staff next to him. The Political Agent and the nobles of the State were seated on Her Highness's left. The visit was a short one, and the usual formalities characterized the proceedings. His Excellency returned to the Lál Kothi at 4 p.m.

At 6 o'clock, Lady Elgin called on Her Highness, and, after taking tea with her, witnessed a display of fireworks from the palace. At night there was a state banquet. Her Highness was

THE EARL OF ELGIN AND KINCARDINE

THE COUNTESS OF ELGIN.

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not present during dinner, but watched the proceedings from an adjoining apartment. When dessert was served, she joined her guests, and, after the royal toast had been honoured, proposed the health of Their Excellencies Lord and Lady Elgin. In reply His Excellency delivered the following speech:

"Your Highness, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I rise to respond to the cordial manner in which you have received the toast of our health, and to express my deep obligation to Her Highness for the kind words in which she has proposed it. This is not the first time on which Her Highness the Begam has welcomed a Viceroy to Bhopál, and has proposed his health, and I think we may feel well assured that any one who comes in the name and as the representative of the Queen-Empress will always be certain to find a ready and friendly welcome from the Ruler of Bhopál. In saying this I wish to draw no invidious comparison, for I have met with too much kindness from other Princes and Chiefs of India, but it is well known that to none of them will the Rulers of Bhopál yield in the loyalty which they have shown to the British Ráj. I feel certain that that loyalty will not only be expressed, as it has been to-night, in eloquent terms by Her Highness, but will also be manifested in action, as it was in the time of her predecessor. I hope that in the circumstances of the present day we shall never see our friend Colonel Barr forced to quit Indore; but if he were, I have no doubt that, as a former Resident found, he also would find ready assistance from the Ruler of Bhopál. In the meantime, Ladies and Gentlemen, we are not surprised to find that Her Highness the Begam gave a ready assent to that movement which

was instituted a few years back to give expression to the loyalty of the Princes and Chiefs of India to the Crown, and that she took advantage, as she has told us this evening, of the opportunity of establishing a regiment of Imperial Service Troops. I am already in a position, from having seen the regiment on escort duty, to congratulate Her Highness on the excellent manner in which they are horsed and equipped, and I have no doubt that in the parade to-morrow they will give a satisfactory account of themselves, and show that they have profited by the supervision they have received from Colonel Melliss and his able Assistant, to whom this movement owes so much.

"Ladies and Gentlemen, there is another matter in which Her Highness the Begam has followed the traditions of her house. The Rulers of Bhopal have ever been known for their charitable instincts, and Her Highness has devoted much time and money to the promotion of public works. I think that there is only one occasion, and that is one to which Her Highness has alluded, on which we regret the institution of public works, and that is when they are called for by deficiency of crops, and the consequent necessity of providing for the due employment of the people and the provision of the food which they require. I, therefore, sincerely join in the hope that Her Highness has expressed this evening, that the unsatisfactory seasons of the last two years may give way to a better prospect, and that the cultivators in this part of the country may reap the profits which justly accrue to them from the fertility of the soil. In other respects, I find it difficult to put a limit to the commendation which is due to a ruler of a State who devotes the revenue of the State to the promotion of works of public utility. There is only one proviso I should like to make in this matter, and that is,

that works are undertaken with a prudent foresight and economy. There is a temptation to look to the immediate benefit which accrues from the opening up of a great country, the crops of which are unable to reach the markets readily; but I think it must be borne in mind that much of that benefit will be lost if the credit of the State is endangered: and the credit of the State is for the future as well as for to-day. It is from an earnest wish to see the highest possible honour associated with the name of Her Highness that I venture to refer to a point that is sometimes overlooked, but which most probably she has already considered and kept in view. Her Highness has alluded to one great work, the Ujjain Railway, in which she has taken a conspicuous interest, and over which I had hoped about this time to be travelling. I have no doubt that that work will be one of great benefit to the country, and that Her Highness will derive all the profit from it which instigated her in undertaking it.

"Ladies and Gentlemen, Her Highness has spoken this evening of the favours which she has received from Her Majesty the Queen-Empress. I hope that Her Highness will believe that Her Majesty, and the Government of India which represents Her Majesty, are ever willing to recognize the good work which is done by the rulers of States for the benefit of their subjects; and, therefore, in thanking her once again for the kindly welcome which she has given to us, for the splendid reception which she has provided for us, and for the magnificent spectacle which we have seen in our drive to the city this evening, I should like to express an earnest hope that she may have long life and happiness to enjoy the honours which have been so worthily conferred upon her. I ask you, Ladies and Gentlemen, to join with me in

drinking to the health of Her Highness the Begam of Bhopál."

The next day, Lady Elgin, accompanied by Surgeon Lieutenant-Colonel Franklin, Honorary Secretary to the Central Committee of the Lady Dufferin Fund, inspected the Lady Lansdowne Hospital. Both Lady Elgin and Colonel Franklin spoke in high praise of the arrangements of the hospital, and recorded their approbation in the Visitors' Book. In the evening, Their Excellencies left Bhopál by special train, their departure being private.

Not long after the visit of Lord Elgin, the death took place of Munshi Imtiyáz Ali Khán. He had been one of the chief adherents of Sidik Hasan Khán, and, as my readers know, succeeded Colonel Ward as Minister of the State. Munshi Imtiyáz Ali Khán was a native of Kárkori, in the district of Lucknow, and his appointment to the office of Minister was engineered by Sidik Hasan Khán. He was the product of an ancient and narrow system of education, and had passed most of his life as a pleader. To maintain the administration in the same state of efficiency in which his predecessor had left it, required only ordinary ability and experience. But Imtiyáz Ali possessed neither of these qualifications, nor was he fitted by character or breeding for the post he occupied.

Colonel Ward had reformed every branch of the State service, and a substantial increase in the revenue was already testifying to the wisdom of his management. Imtiyáz Ali's assumption

of office was signalized by a complete reversal of the policy of the two previous years. One of his first acts was to discharge a number of able and trustworthy officers who had been appointed by Colonel Ward, and to fill their places with indigent friends and relatives of his own, who were incapable of earning a livelihood elsewhere, and who possessed not a single qualification for the work they were given to do. He then proceeded to make a radical change in the revenue department, abolishing the *mustájiri* system[1] of collecting land rent, and introducing the *khám* system in its place. Hundreds of villages were made *khám*, and large advances in grain and money were made by the State. The ostensible object of this legislation was to improve the condition of the cultivator. Its actual result was that the cultivators became worse off than they had been for years, while many *mustájirs* were practically ruined, and the State treasury was seriously impoverished. This disastrous result was due, not so much to the new system, as to the iniquitous manner in which it was carried into effect. The cultivators, for whose benefit corn and money were advanced by the State, grew poorer and poorer, while those who were entrusted with the distribution fattened on their ill-gotten gains. To make matters worse, three bad seasons came in succession, the wheat crops failing almost entirely. The cultivators received no compensa-

[1] Under the *mustajiri* system the cultivator holds his land under a *mustajir*, or middle man; under the *khám* system he deals directly with the State, or the proprietor of the land.

tion, and the result of this accumulation of calamities was that the area of cultivated land decreased by a third, and the population of the State fell from 900,000 to 600,000.

But if the revenue administration was bad, judicial affairs were in an even worse case. Laws and courts of justice there certainly were, but any appeal to them which was not backed up by a full purse was made in vain. Civil suits were little more than bribery competitions, and criminals were acquitted or convicted according to the means at their disposal. The high officials of the State had their private agents in every district, whose business it was to line their patrons' pockets, receiving, in return, protection whilst they lined their own. If a complaint against a subordinate officer was made to the Begam, she referred the matter to the Minister, and the person who lodged the complaint generally found it to his advantage to withdraw it. Complaints against the Minister himself were equally futile; for Imtiyáz Ali Khán had his full share of Lucknow eloquence, and he easily persuaded Her Highness to regard such attacks as gross and malicious libels on his spotless character. The consequences of his three years' administration are apparent to this day, and the State is still engaged in undoing the mischief which he wrought. Most of those who aided him in his progress of corruption were from Lucknow. They came, many of them, as Tahsildars on small pay, and in little more than two years returned to their native city wealthy men. It is little wonder, then, that there is keen competition in

Lucknow for posts in the Bhopál State, which is evidently regarded there as a modern El Dorado.

Imtiyáz Ali Khán owed his powerful position in the State to the support he received from Sidik Hasan Khán, who not only helped him to grow rich, but shielded and defended him whenever there was danger of his conduct being called in question. On the death of the latter, however, it became necessary for the Begam to take a more active and personal part in the conduct of affairs, and Imtiyáz Ali's position at once became insecure. Complaint after complaint was brought against him, and at last the Begam's suspicions were thoroughly roused. A public investigation of his conduct was on the point of being held when he fell ill and died. Imtiyáz Ali Khán will not escape the investigation, but it will take place in a court where truth, and not gold, will determine the verdict.

The next Minister of the State was Khán Bahádur Maulavi Abdul Jabbar Khán, C.I.E., an account of whose administration will be given in a later chapter.

After the opening of the Bhopal State Railway, it soon became apparent that the construction of a line from Bhopál to Ujjain, besides being of great service to the travelling public, would add considerably to the commercial prosperity of Central India. After corresponding with the States of Gwálior, Diwás, and Bhopál, the Government of India, in 1891, caused a survey of the route to be made. It was at first proposed to make a narrow-gauge line; but this did not meet with the ap-

proval of Her Highness, and, after a lengthy correspondence, she persuaded the Government to consent to the adoption of the broad gauge. The railway was built in five years, and in February, 1896, both goods and passenger traffic commenced. The construction of this line was much more rapid than that of the Bhopál State Railway. Moreover, the latter had been open for nine years before the State drew any income from it, whereas the new line commenced to pay from the very outset. The actual opening ceremony did not take place till January, 1897. It was performed by the Honourable Colonel Barr, Agent to the Governor-General for Central India. A large company witnessed the ceremony, the European guests including the chief officers of the railway with the ladies of their families. At the conclusion of the ceremony, all the arrangements for which were made by, and at the expense of, the Company, Her Highness, with the Agent to the Governor-General and her other guests, embarked on a special train, and were taken to Sehore, where they were entertained at a garden party. Before returning to Bhopál, Her Highness, with the consent of the Company, distributed presents to all the subordinate servants of the railway, and announced her intention of providing a library at the Bhopál Station for the use of the staff. Later in the evening, a large number of fakirs and poor people were fed at her expense at the Sehore Station. The total cost of the section of the line lying within the Bhopál territory was Rs. 18,890,68. 2. 11.

Amongst the speeches made on this occasion, the two following are worthy to be recorded:

Speech of Her Highness the Begam

"Colonel Barr, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I thank God for this happy day, on which, thirteen years after the completion of the Bhopál State Railway, we are able to open this new line from Bhopál to Ujjain. For the benefits that will result from it to the trade and the people of Central India, and especially to the inhabitants of Bhopál, we are indebted, firstly, to the grace and favour of Her Most Gracious Majesty, the Queen-Empress, and, secondly, to the good government which this small State has enjoyed through the kind patronage of His Excellency the Viceroy, and the sympathetic support of Colonel Barr, Agent to the Governor-General in Central India, and Major Meade, Political Agent in Bhopál. I am most grateful to Colonel Barr for the honour he has conferred upon us by coming here to-day to perform the opening ceremony. And I offer my congratulations to Mr. Sherman, Chief Engineer of the railway, on the able manner in which he has carried out the construction of this line, and on his having so skilfully combined speed with economy, that we are already enjoying our share of the profits, instead of having to wait nine years for them, as we had to do in the case of the Bhopál State Railway. I also desire to thank Major and Mrs. Meade, and all my other guests, for their kindness in coming to grace these proceedings. In conclusion, I pray for the continued prosperity of the British Empire, and for that of its Ruler, whom I shall ever regard as a Mother. May she never cease to bestow, upon my State and myself, the blessings of her royal favour."

SPEECH OF THE HONOURABLE COLONEL BARR

* "Nawáb Begam Sáhiba, Ladies and Gentlemen,—Before I fulfil Her Highness's desire and declare the Bhopál section of this railway open, I must briefly explain to you why it is that we are taking part in this ceremony to-day. The Bhopál-Ujjain Railway has actually been open to traffic since the month of April; but as it was then the hot season, and the journey to Bhopál would have been attended with a certain amount of discomfort, Her Highness, at my request, very kindly postponed the opening ceremony till the present more favourable occasion. It is a great pleasure to me that, on this my first official visit to Bhopál, I have been able to comply with Her Highness's wishes, and to accompany her in her first journey over this new line.

"Her Highness the Begam is among those Indian Chiefs who have been the first to recognize the advantage of railway extension. The Bhopal State Railway, from Itársi to Bhopál, was opened in 1884. It was a very costly undertaking; for not only had the Narbadda to be bridged at Hoshangábád, in itself a gigantic task, but the line had to be carried across the Vindhia Hills, necessitating bridges and cuttings which involved great labour and heavy expense. Although it is true, as Her Highness has remarked, that for several years the line was worked without any pecuniary profit, yet its importance can hardly be overestimated: for it was one of the foundations of the Indian Midland Railway system, which now traverses so large a portion of Central India, extending from Itársi through Bhopál, Jhánsi, and Gwálior, to Agra, with branches connecting Jhánsi with Cawnpore and Manikpur, and Bhopál with Ujjain. I am sure, ladies and gentlemen, that you will join me in congratulating Her Highness most

IR DAVID W. KEITH BARR.

cordially on the completion of this last section of the Indian Midland Railway, and in expressing the hope that she may enjoy the fruits of the liberality she has displayed in its construction. I trust that this line will not only prove a source of profit to Her Highness, but that it will increase both the trade of her State and the prosperity and comfort of her people, and, which is of even greater importance, that it will, by facilitating the transportation of grain, do much to mitigate the sufferings of the poor in years of scarcity like the present.

"Her Highness has acknowledged her indebtedness to Mr. Sherman, who was the Chief Engineer of this railway from the day it was commenced till its completion. I, also, desire to offer my thanks and congratulations to Mr. Sherman, and to all those who have been associated with him in his labours. We are so accustomed in these days to travelling on railways that we seldom think of or appreciate the thousand difficulties and responsibilities that have to be faced by those who, like Mr. Sherman, undertake the planning, constructing, and organizing of these great works.

"Nawáb Begam Sáhiba, I assure you that I and all your guests have heard with real pleasure the words of loyalty you have spoken to-day, for we know that these words are the genuine expression of your personal feelings; and we look upon the zeal and energy with which you have supported this and other works of public utility as the natural outcome of your devotion to that Noble Lady who is not only the Queen of England, but the Mother of her people in all parts of the world.

"Ladies and gentlemen, I now declare this line open, and I ask you to join me in drinking to the health of Her Highness the Begam, and to the prosperity of the Bhopál-Ujjain Railway."

CHAPTER XIX

DIAMOND JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS—INTRODUCTION OF BRITISH COINAGE—VISIT OF LORD CURZON TO BHOPAL—MARRIAGES OF MY SONS

EARLY in June, 1897, the State Minister, Maulavi Abdul Jabbar Khán, C.I.E., received a letter from the Political Agent informing him that, in accordance with the orders of the Viceroy, the 21st and 22nd days of June would be observed as public holidays throughout British India, in honour of the completion by Her Majesty the Queen-Empress of sixty years of her reign. Her Highness at once directed that the same days should be observed as holidays in the State, and preparations were made to celebrate so memorable an event in a loyal and becoming manner.

On the appointed day, a grand durbar was held at the Shaukat Mahal, and was attended by all the nobles and chief officers of the State. At its conclusion, presents were distributed to a large number of deserving officials, and twenty-four poor students of the Victoria School received each a new suit of clothes. Orders were given for the release of a number of prisoners from the jail, and

for the reduction of the sentences of others. A parade of the State troops took place on the Jahángírábád parade ground, and a royal salute of a hundred and one guns was fired. In the evening, the public buildings, forts, and offices, as well as the chief private houses of the city, were illuminated, and corn and rice were distributed to the poor. The public offices remained closed on both the above-mentioned days, and corn was distributed in all the *tahsils* of the State. On July 8th, Her Highness gave a dinner to her European friends at the Lál Kothi. The health of the Queen was proposed by Her Highness in person, the Political Agent proposed the health of Her Highness, and the Minister that of the guests. Her Highness's speech was as follows:

"Ladies and Gentlemen,—I have asked you to meet me here to-night that we may rejoice together on the great and memorable occasion of the Diamond Jubilee of Her Majesty the Queen-Empress—an occasion that has filled every heart in India, and especially my own, with thankfulness and joy. I say 'especially my own,' for it was in Her Majesty's reign that I was born, it was in Her Majesty's reign that I became the Ruler of this State, and it was Her Majesty who bestowed upon me the order of the Crown of India, and who made me a Grand Commander of the Star of India. I rejoice, too, to think that my Sovereign is a woman, and, though I have never had the high privilege of paying my loyal respects to her in person, I, yet, regard her with all the affection of a daughter; indeed, she occupies the same place in my heart as did my Mother, Nawáb Sikandar

Begam. The greatness of her virtues, and the blessings of her rule, are more than mere words can utter. The history of her reign is a record of progress in science, art, commerce, and all that makes for civilization and peace, such as the world has never known before.

"I did not arrange this dinner on the 21st of June, because I thought that on that day every one would prefer to rejoice in his own home. The celebration of the Jubilee in England has not yet come to an end, so there is nothing unbecoming in thus prolonging the period of our festivities in Bhopál.

"Ladies and Gentlemen, I ask you to join me in drinking to the health of Her Majesty the Queen-Empress, and I pray God to prolong her life for many years to come."

A *kharíta*, containing an account of the celebrations that had taken place in Bhopál, was dispatched to His Excellency the Viceroy, and a sum of two thousand rupees was contributed to the fund which had been opened for the purpose of erecting a statue of Her Majesty the Queen in Calcutta.

Another interesting event that took place during the year 1897 was the introduction into the State of the coinage of British India. Previous to this time, the State had coined its own silver and copper money, which was stamped with the name of the ruler and the date of issue. My Mother, foreseeing that the financial administration of the State, and commercial transactions generally, would be greatly facilitated by the adoption of the coinage current in British India, had approached the

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL L. S. NEWMARCH.

Government of India on the subject as far back as the year 1892. After a great deal of correspondence, the Government of India agreed to take over the current money of the State at the rate of 124 Bhopál rupees for 100 British. The details having been settled, a circular containing the rules of exchange was published throughout the State, as well as in Narsinghgarh, Rájgarh, Maksudgarh, Sotiála, and other States of the Agency where Bhopál money was current. The period fixed for the exchange was from October 1st, 1897, to February 1st, 1898, after which Bhopál money ceased to be current, and represented nothing more than its market value as silver or copper. A 10-per-cent. reduction was made in the revenue demanded from *mustájirs* and cultivators as soon as the new system was established.

On all sums deposited as security by *mustájirs* as well as on money realized from attached *jágír* villages, exchange was calculated at government rates. That her subjects might not have to incur any loss, Her Highness agreed to accept all Bhopál money, that had not lost more than 2 per cent. in weight, in exchange for British coin, and to bear all expenses incidental to such transactions. The pay of all State servants drawing ten rupees a month, or less, remained unchanged, a reduction of 10 per cent. being made in the case of those who drew more than that amount. The new system being completely established, information to that effect was sent to the Government of India. A reply was received in which the Government expressed its gratification, and congratulated

Her Highness on the able manner in which the exchange had been effected.

In September, 1898, Her Highness wrote to Lord Elgin, who was about to leave Simla, expressing her desire to bid him farewell before his departure for England, and asking permission to meet him at any point on his journey that might be convenient. A *kharíta* was received in reply stating that it would give His Excellency great pleasure to see Her Highness again, and that Cawnpore would be the most convenient meeting-place. Accordingly, my Mother, accompanied by the Political Agent and the Minister. went to Cawnpore on November 8th. The meeting took place at the railway station, where suitable arrangements had been made by the State, and His Excellency remained in conversation with Her Highness until the departure of his train. Her Highness rested the night in Cawnpore, and returned to Bhopál the next day.

Lord Elgin, as my readers know, was succeeded in the Viceroyalty by Lord Curzon; and in November of the following year he, too, honoured my Mother by paying a visit to her Capital. The announcement was made to Her Highness three months beforehand by the Political Agent. It is unnecessary for me to describe the preparations that were made. Suffice to say that the welcome extended by the State to Lord and Lady Curzon was no less magnificent, and no less hearty, than those which had greeted his predecessors. Many English and Indian guests were invited to meet Their Excellencies, the latter including the Rájas

BARON CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

of Narsinghgarh, Rájgarh, and Kilchipúr, and the Nawábs of Maksudgarh and Basoda. As usual, a programme of the visit was received beforehand, and it was announced that the arrival of Lady Curzon would take place ten minutes before that of the Viceroy.

In accordance with the programme, Her Highness reached the railway station shortly after 9 a.m. on the morning of the 25th. She was accompanied by the Minister and other State officers. Lady Curzon arrived at 9.45 a.m. by special train, and was welcomed by Her Highness, with whom she remained in conversation until the arrival of His Excellency's train at 10 o'clock. Her Highness, clad in a *burkha*, and wearing the orders of a Grand Commander of the Star of India, received His Excellency on the platform, and with great cordiality bade him welcome to her State. The chief officials present were then introduced, after which His Excellency inspected the Imperial Service troops and the State troops, which were drawn up outside the station, the latter carrying the *máhi marátib*, and the flag which had been presented to the State at the Delhi Durbar. The party then went in procession to the Lál Kothi, Lord and Lady Curzon, with Major Newmarch and Captain Wigram, occupying the first carriage, and Her Highness following in the second. A squadron of the Victoria Lancers formed the escort, and His Excellency was loudly cheered by the spectators, who had gathered in large numbers along the route. At noon the Minister and two Sirdars called at the Lál Kothi to make the

mizáj pursi, and at 3 p.m., Her Highness paid His Excellency a State visit. The visit was returned at 6 p.m. the same evening at the Táj Mahal, His Excellency expressing himself greatly pleased at the decorations and illuminations in honour of his visit. In the evening, Her Highness entertained her guests at a banquet at the Lál Kothi, and in the following words proposed the health of Lord and Lady Curzon:

"Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I have no fear of being contradicted when I say that, at the present moment, there is no one in this vast Empire of India more fortunate or more honoured than I am, in that I have the privilege of counting among my guests the Viceroy of our beloved Queen—may her Empire last for ever!—and the noble Lady who shares the dignity of his high office. My gratitude for the honour done to me and to my State by their presence here to-day is more than I can express. His Excellency knows that my predecessors have ever been loyal to the British Throne, and, since I became the Ruler of Bhopál, I have had no dearer ambition than to follow the example they have set before me. My subjects, both Muhammadan and Hindu, are faithful supporters of Her Majesty's Government, and I trust that the regiment of Imperial Service Lancers, which the State now maintains, will enable many of them to give a practical proof of their desire to defend and advance its welfare. Since the visit of Lord Lansdowne, the most important events in the history of the State have been the introduction of the coinage of British India, and the passing of the Arms Act. The former, by abolishing the difficulties of exchange,

has done much to facilitate commerce; and the latter, by making it impossible for persons of criminal disposition to go about armed, has added greatly to the security of the people. The most important public work has, of course, been the construction of the Ujjain Railway. Owing to a succession of bad seasons there has, during the past two or three years, been much distress in the State; and, although better crops were raised last year, the cultivators are still feeling the effect of their heavy losses. This year the monsoon has again partially failed us; but if, by the Grace of God, rain falls in the cold season, we may hope to escape the misfortunes of a famine.

"I beg to express once more my deep sense of the honour Your Excellency has done me in visiting my Capital. Your Excellency will be entertained by many worthier hosts, but it will be long before I can again have the good fortune to welcome so distinguished a guest. May God long preserve Her Imperial Majesty Queen Victoria, and may He grant health and happiness to her Viceroy in India, and bless his rule with peace and prosperity.

"Ladies and Gentlemen, I ask you to drink the health of Their Excellencies Lord and Lady Curzon."

Lord Curzon replied as follows:

"Your Highness, Ladies and Gentlemen,—Her Highness the Begam, whose guests we have the pleasure of being to-night, has the gift of graceful speech no less than that of magnificent hospitality. She has proposed the health of Lady Curzon and myself in terms so felicitous that in our recollections they will always crown the memory of our first official visit to one of the principal Native States of India. It is a satisfaction to me to think

that the particular State which thus receives us should be one the Ruler of which has during a period of more than thirty years won so honourable a reputation for enlightenment and public-spirited administration, besides sustaining the tradition, already rendered notable by the conduct of her mother, of devoted loyalty to the British Crown. That the sceptre need not pass into feeble hands or irresolute hands when, by the accident of fortune, it is wielded by a woman, is shown by the career of our beloved sovereign Her Majesty the Queen-Empress; nor may we fail on a smaller scale to find an illustration of the same phenomenon in the case of the two successive Begams who have now, for a combined period of more than half a century, presided over the fortunes of the State of Bhopál. Her Highness's mother was distinguished, not only, as I have said, for her fidelity to the British Ráj, but also for her ability as a ruler. Similarly the rule of Her Highness has been rendered memorable by many acts of administrative prudence and private generosity, while from the speech which has just been delivered I gather with pleasure that her active interest in the well-being of her subjects is far from being exhausted, and that she still continues to devise and carry out projects which testify to her practical wisdom and will conduce to the prosperity of the State.

"I shall on Monday morning have the pleasure of inspecting on the parade ground the regiment of cavalry which Her Highness has contributed to the defence of the Empire, and which she has designated with the name of Her Majesty the Queen-Empress. Her Highness has never failed to take as great an interest in these men as though she were herself their military commander, and I am pleased to hear that she has recently added to the

attractions of the regiment by raising the scale of pay.

"I look with great interest on the conversion of the native currencies in the Feudatory States of India, and the substitution for them of the uniform and stable coinage of the British mints. In taking this step, as far back as 1897, Her Highness has acted as a pioneer in a movement in which I believe that she is destined to find many followers, and which must unquestionably tend to the commercial advantage of the entire community. Similarly, Her Highness has been well advised in keeping her eye upon the gangs of desperate and unruly men who from time to time raise their heads even in modern India, and who find in any season of distress an opportunity for reviving the discredited profession of predatory crime. The first test of an orderly State is the security which it gives to the life and property of its citizens, and dacoits are a public scourge to whom the State should show no mercy.

"It is a source of great gratification to me to find on coming into the Bhopál State that although, as Her Highness has said, the situation is not altogether free from anxiety as to the agricultural outlook, yet the circumstances of this part of India are much more favourable than many of those which I have lately been visiting. It is a trying experience to see pinched human faces and dying cattle. I echo Her Highness's prayer that in this State she may escape both calamities, and that Providence may be merciful to her people.' In conclusion, it only remains for me to thank Her Highness the Begam for the friendly and auspicious wishes she has uttered on behalf of Lady Curzon and myself, to assure her that we shall not forget our right royal welcome in this State, and to ask all the ladies and gentlemen seated at this table,

and who, like ourselves, are recipients of her profuse hospitality, to join with me in drinking long life and prosperity to Her Highness the Begam of Bhopál."

His Excellency's speech met with loud applause, and Her Highness received the hearty good wishes of all her guests. The company then adjourned to the gardens, where a grand display of fireworks brought the evening's entertainment to a close. In the morning, His Excellency visited the Fort, and rested during the remainder of the day. Lady Curzon, in company with Her Highness, visited the Lady Lansdowne Hospital. Her Excellency went through all the wards, and spoke to many of the patients, inquiring minutely about their treatment. She was much pleased on being informed that nurses were trained in the Hospital, and sent out to attend cases in the city and district.

On the morning of the 27th, Lord Curzon reviewed the Imperial Service Troops. After the march past he briefly addressed the Officers, complimenting them on the behaviour of their men on parade, and speaking in high terms of the good order and completeness of their accoutrements and the condition of their horses. After breakfast, a snipe-shooting expedition was organized, and resulted in the biggest bag ever made in Bhopál, His Excellency making the top score. Farewell visits occupied the afternoon, and in the evening, after dinner, their Excellencies drove to the railway station, and spent the night on board

LADY CURZON.

their train, which left early in the morning for Sánchi. Here a halt of two hours was made, and a visit was paid to the Buddhist topes, after which the party re-embarked for Gwalior.

I greatly desired to meet His Excellency during his visit to Bhopál; but having regard to the strained relations that existed between my Mother and myself, he evidently deemed it inexpedient to receive me. Lady Curzon, however, showed me the greatest kindness; and as long as she remained in India I continued to receive tokens of her friendly feelings towards me. I shall never forget this kindness; and when, in the year 1906, the news of her untimely death reached me, I was filled with sorrow, for I felt that I had lost a true friend.

When my two sons, Sáhibzáda Obaidullah Khán and Nawáb Nasrullah Khán, reached the ages of 22 and 23 years respectively I began to consider seriously the question of getting them married. My Mother's anger had, so far, prevented any steps in this direction from being taken. Now, however, my sons had reached manhood, and since it is generally acknowledged that, in a hot country like India, late marriages are undesirable, I felt that the necessary negotiations could be no longer delayed. Proposals had already reached me from several of the Muhammadan States of India, and I had reviewed in my own mind the qualifications of the various marriageable girls in the families of my husband and my father; but I had come to no definite decision, for custom and the terms of my own

marriage agreement alike demanded that the selection of my sons' brides should rest with Her Highness. I, therefore, made known my desire to her in the following letter, which I sent through the Minister of the State:

"Seeing that my two sons, Nawáb Nasrullah Khán and Sáhibzáda Obaidullah Khán, are now grown up, I desire to consult Your Highness on the subject of their marriages, which has been causing me anxiety for some time past. Pecuniary embarrassments, consequent upon the late famine, have prevented me from taking this step before. Even now I am hardly in a position to incur heavy expenditure; but the ages at which my sons have arrived make it undesirable that there should be any further delay. In my opinion, there are only two families with which alliances would be acceptable, namely, those of my father and my husband. I have received proposals from Hyderabad, Jaora, and other States, to none of which I have, as yet, sent replies. I beg, therefore, that you will be good enough to favour me with your opinion and advice."

My Mother sent me no written reply to this letter, but she summoned the Minister, and said to him, "I have no objection to the Sáhibzádas' marrying into the family of their father, but alliances with the family of Sultán Jahán's father are out of the question, and would never receive my consent."

Her Highness's answer was communicated to me by the Minister, who concluded his letter with

these words: "My own advice, if I may be allowed to offer it, is that the two daughters of your husband's sister should be chosen as brides for your sons. I do not think that any selection could be more suitable." This advice pleased both me and the Nawáb Sáhib: and, as the sister in question expressed her readiness to abide by her brother's decision, the matter was finally settled.

There are few events which afford greater joy to parents than the marriages of their sons. I felt that my happiness would be complete if only I could secure Her Highness's presence at the nuptial ceremony, and I resolved to make yet another attempt to win her forgiveness. My letter, and the reply I received to it, will acquaint my readers with the result of my appeal. With mingled feelings of hope and despair I wrote:

"Your Highness has, doubtless, read my letter of the 15th Zil Kádah, regarding the celebration of my sons' nuptials. Save your Highness, I have no other patron, and to Your Highness my husband and I owe all that we possess—our property, our position, and our honour. It is my earnest wish that Your Highness should preside over this ceremony, for otherwise there can be no happiness for me in it. If I have offended, it has never been willingly or consciously; and my husband and I have no other desire than to consult in all things your will and pleasure. But man is prone to sin: we, therefore, beg for the forgiveness of our faults, to the better comfort of ourselves and of Your Highness in both the worlds. In spite of my

own unworthiness, I am bold enough to rely upon Your Highness's generosity for a favourable reply."

The answer to this petition was forwarded to me by the Minister:

"My presence at the nuptials of Mián Nasrullah Khan and Mián Obaidullah Khán can do no good, nor can my absence cause any ill either to them or to their parents. To the parents the responsibility of arranging such matters belongs, and my presence, being a matter of no importance, should be neither desired nor expected.

"The forgiveness of sins rests with God alone. I, too, am a sinner, and to Him only I look for pardon.

"I trust that Sultán Jahán Begam will refrain from troubling me in future, and that the question of my attending the marriage will not again be referred to."

Simultaneously with the nuptials of my elder sons, it was my intention to celebrate the *khatna* ceremony of my youngest son, Sáhibzáda Hamidullah Khán, following the example of the Prophet, and of those who came before him since the days of Abraham, the Friend of God. In spite of the disappointment which filled our hearts on account of the rejection of our petition, we decided that these several rites could not be deferred, and they were, accordingly, performed at the Sadar Manzil at 5 p.m. on Saturday, the 15th of Rajab, 1318 A.H. I have always looked with disfavour on the superfluous ritual with which Muhammadans usually

NAWAB IHTISHAM-UL-MULK WITH SAHIBZADA HAMIDULLAH KHAN.

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adorn their religious ceremonies, and I endeavour, as far as I can, to set an example of simplicity. On the present occasion, no ceremonial was observed which the laws of Islám do not strictly enjoin. The members of my household were the only people who witnessed the proceedings: my relations followed the example set by my Mother, and none of the State officials were present. The marriage *khutbah* was read by Kázi Abdul Hak, the State Kázi, and everything, including the *khatna* ceremony of Sáhibzáda Hamidullah Khán, was completed before the hour of evening prayer.

The *nikah*, or marriage proper, which had just been performed, is a purely religious ceremony, and is not the occasion for any great display of joy. The actual wedding festival, or *shádi*, takes place when the bride is welcomed to her new home. A considerable period of time often elapses between the *nikah* and the *shádi*, and in the present instance I determined that the latter should be postponed, for I had a lingering hope that my Mother might yet be induced to relent. Early the next month, however, we heard that Her Highness had fallen ill, and, as day by day the reports of her condition became more and more unfavourable, I decided to abandon all thoughts of the *shádi* until her recovery; for while she lay on a bed of suffering, I felt that I had little heart for scenes of joy and mirth. In spite of all that had passed, my love for her had never diminished. She was still to me the Mother I had known in my childhood; for I knew that her hostile attitude towards me was no part of her real nature, but had been thrust upon her by those

whom she had no power to resist. I earnestly hoped that her life might be a long one, for I coveted neither her position nor her wealth, and I felt that, sooner or later, the day must come when I should be restored to her affections, and, beyond this, I had no further ambition.

CHAPTER XX

THE DEATH OF NAWAB SHAH JAHAN BEGAM

About the beginning of Rabbi-ul-awwal, 1318 A.H., a small sore appeared on my Mother's left cheek. At first it was considered too trifling to need attention. After some days, however, it became large and painful, and native remedies were applied, but their only effect was to aggravate the sore. Skilled Indian doctors were then called in, but their treatment gave my Mother no relief, and it soon became apparent that she was suffering from cancer. Doctor Anderson, a physician of repute from Lucknow, was next summoned. He at once recognized the seriousness of the case, and said that the removal of the cancer was the only means of saving the patient's life. Doctor Dane, the Agency Surgeon, was of the same opinion, and my Mother expressed herself willing to be guided by their advice. A time was, accordingly, fixed upon, and the necessary arrangements were made. Instruments, bandages, antiseptics, all were laid out in readiness, when my Mother, for some unaccountable reason, changed her mind, and refused to undergo the operation.

There was nothing for it but to fall back upon

ordinary remedies, and hope for the best. Unfortunately, many things were happening to disturb my Mother's peace of mind. In addition to her illness, the serious nature of which she fully understood, and the anxiety which her inability to attend to the business of the State naturally caused her, a new and heavy trouble came upon her; for she began to realize, for the first time, that those about her, whom she had been accustomed to, regard as her faithful friends and retainers, were mere sycophants, indifferent alike to her sufferings and her commands, and intent only on turning to their advantage any opportunities which the adversity of their mistress might afford.

Nawáb Shah Jahán Begam was, by nature, tender-hearted and affectionate. She was my Mother; and it was plain to all who had access to her that her days were numbered. In such circumstances, no efforts should have been spared to banish from her mind the remembrance of all past misunderstandings, and to restore me again to her affection. But her "friends" thought otherwise, and did their best to turn her thoughts away from me and my family, and to foster her determination never to see me again. In addition to this, my Mother's private affairs were mismanaged in the most shameful manner. Realizing that her malady was incurable, one object seemed to animate the members of her household, and that was to lay hold of as much wealth as possible before the end came. Even her sickness was turned into a source of profit; and the major portion of the huge sums sanctioned for doctors' fees, and for daily distribution in alms to

THE TAJ MAHAL AND BE NAZIR PALACES.

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the poor, found its way into their hands. Information of these doings reached my Mother; indeed, they were a matter of common talk; and, though keenly grieved by the treachery and ingratitude of those for whom she had done so much, she could not bring herself to charge them openly with their malpractices, which continued unchecked till her death.

Among those who were in constant attendance at the palace was Ali Hasan Khán, the son of Sidik Hasan Khán. His daughter had recently been betrothed, and Her Highness had promised to bestow upon her a rich dowry. No one with any real affection for Her Highness could have considered the time suitable for marriage festivities. Nevertheless, Ali Hasan Khán begged her to permit his daughter's nuptials to be celebrated during her lifetime. The permission was given, and orders were issued for the payment of the dowry, though Her Highness saw plainly the motive for Ali Hasan Khán's indecent haste, and bitterly complained of his behaviour. "My daughter," she said, "whose two sons have just been married, will consent to no rejoicings whilst I am on a bed of sickness. But from these people, whom I have treated as my children, I receive neither consideration nor respect." Ali Hasan Khán's house was close to the Táj Mahal, and the sounds of revelry and merriment, which accompanied the celebration of the marriage, were plainly heard in the chamber where the ruler of the State lay awaiting the approach of death. It was a heartless and unseemly proceeding; but those who

took part in it were strangers, noble neither by birth nor by nature: and it must have been a melancholy thought for my Mother that it was by such as these that she had allowed her own flesh and blood to be supplanted.

Soon after Her Highness had refused to submit to an operation, Mián Alamgír Muhammad Khán came to the palace to make inquiries. He was admitted to the sick-room, but instead of approaching the couch on which the patient lay, he seated himself as far away from it as possible. This behaviour, so different from that which Her Highness was accustomed to from him, wounded her deeply, and she said: "Alamgír, I know why you do not come near me. Now that I am sick, I am no longer worth consideration. I have put you in the place of my own child, I have lavished lákhs of rupees upon you, and this is my recompense." She said no more, but the bitterness of her feelings was plainly manifested in her face. Alamgír Muhammad Khán tried to make excuses. "It is not for that reason," he said, "that I do not approach you. It is because I cannot bear to see you so ill. Why do you remain obstinate? Why will you not undergo the treatment which is so necessary?" "The presence of Sultán Jahán alone can do me good," was Her Highness's reply. The words escaped her involuntarily, and she immediately added, "But because of Sultán Dula, I will never see her."

That my Mother's thoughts were constantly turning towards me there can be no doubt. Many of those in the palace expected that I should be

sent for; and, believing that my restoration to favour was not far distant, their manner towards me underwent an entire change. Indifference gave way to obsequious respect: those who had ignored my existence before came to me hourly with reports of my Mother's condition, and of all that took place in the Táj Mahal. Whether the news they brought me was true or false, I had no means of telling, and my anxiety and agitation were increased rather than diminished by their behaviour. I had good reason to be agitated: for, while my favour was being courted in this fashion, fresh and slanderous reports about me were daily being carried to Her Highness. I was even accused of bringing about her illness by means of magic. A picture of herself, pierced through and through with needles, and otherwise disfigured, and said to have been taken from a tank in the Núr Mahal, was produced before her as proof of my dealings in the Black Art. My Mother was no believer in magic, and at once recognized the picture as one that she herself had given to Nawáb Sidik Hasan Khán. And the fact that it was found within the precincts of the Núr Mahal (to which I could not possibly have access), indicated plainly enough where, and by whom, this little conspiracy had been hatched.

Five months before her death, my Mother announced her intention of performing the *haj.* "My end is near," she said, "and in the Holy City I shall find comfort and peace. The administration of the State I will leave in the charge of Sultán Jahán." But this pious resolution was never

accomplished, though full preparations for the journey were made. As soon as it became known that I was to be appointed Regent, Alamgír Muhammad Khán, Ali Hasan Khán, Hámid Husein, Keeper of Her Highness's household, and others of their kindred, at once set to work to prevent the pilgrimage from taking place, for my assumption of authority would have meant to these men not only loss, but exposure, neither of which they were at all prepared to face. For some little time it appeared that their efforts would be unsuccessful. They of course pointed out the impropriety of handing over the reins of government to one as undutiful as I had shown myself to be; but Her Highness's only reply was, "For the advancement of your children, about which you have always been so solicitous, I have done more than enough, and you will therefore forgive me if I now refuse to do injustice to my own." At last, they determined to work upon her fears. She had an instinctive dread of the sea, and the prospect of an ocean voyage was for her full of terrors. It so happened that a shipwreck, involving the loss of many lives, had recently taken place. On a suitable occasion, therefore, the subject was mentioned in her presence, and this led naturally to a detailed account of the whole tragedy, the horrors of which made such an impression on her mind that she there and then abandoned her project. And thus, by those who owed everything to her favour and generosity, the highest purpose of her life was defeated.

Days passed, and my Mother's condition grew

steadily worse. A few days before her death, she caused the following pathetic notice to be published:

"If there are any among my subjects who, during the thirty-three years of my reign, have received unmerited punishment at my hands, I ask them, in the name of God, to forgive me."

The people of Bhopál received this last message from their dying ruler with sorrow and sympathy, and there was not one amongst them who did not pray to God that the burden of her afflictions might be lightened. My own emotion as I read the words I will not attempt to describe. I longed for only one sentence more, "I too forgive the faults of others," and I read and re-read the message in the vain hope that I had overlooked it. With such words to support me I could have gone to my Mother, and, having won the forgiveness which she could no longer have withheld, I could have cheered the last moments of her life with the pent-up love of twenty-seven long years. I prayed for her recovery night and day, and the thought of her sufferings filled my mind. At last, as every day brought worse tidings, my anxiety became more than I could bear, and I determined to go to the Táj Mahal, let my enemies put what construction they would upon my visit. I set out with my heart full of misgivings. My husband was even more uneasy, and, fearing that his presence might stir my Mother to anger, and that her sickness might thereby be aggravated, he did not accompany me.

I took with me only Hamidullah Khán, my youngest son. He was then seven years old, and I know not what were the thoughts that filled his childish mind as he passed, for the first time in his life, beneath the gateway of his Grandmother's palace. I myself had been there but once, when my daughter Bilkis Jahán was sick, and since that time thirteen years had elapsed. It was 2 o'clock in the afternoon when we arrived, and the day was intensely hot. Few people were about, and, for all the notice that was taken of us, we might have been utter strangers. I inquired the way of one person after another, and we at length entered the chamber where my Mother lay, with a female attendant seated by her side. My first impulse was to throw myself weeping at her feet, but the fear of her displeasure, and the remembrance of the last occasion when I had ventured into her presence, restrained me. I approached a few steps and waited, and Hamidullah, in fear and wonder, stood by my side. Her Highness turned her face towards me, but thirteen years of grief and trouble had made some change in my appearance, and in the subdued light of the sick room she did not at first recognize me. She asked me who I was, but my fear of her displeasure, and of being sent away from her presence, was so great that I gave no answer. Again she put the same question, and asked me why I did not speak. Still I made no reply, and it was not until the question had been asked a third time, and the attendant had spoken my name, that I found my voice, and with clasped

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hands begged her forgiveness. The fears which kept me silent had not been groundless. In a voice in which sorrow and anger were mingled she said, "Leave me; after my death you may come here." Seeing that I still stood there, she repeated the words even more sternly. This time I did not venture to disobey. It was plain that my presence troubled her, and I returned weeping and with a heavy weight at my heart to the Sadar Manzil.

The last stage of the disease was very rapid, if we can call that disease which is almost a living death. Disease has many forms, some of which inspire terror in a greater degree, others in a less. But when all has been said it is Death, and not disease, who baffles human skill. Death's approach may be announced by disease, or he may greet us suddenly—in our sleep, our work, or our play. Whatever the manner of his coming, his hour is fixed, and he neither hastens nor delays. With each one of us Death has an appointment, and whether we go down into the deepest dungeons, or barricade ourselves in fortresses of iron, whether we climb to the tops of the mountains, or fly to the heart of the desert, not by the smallest fraction of time can we postpone the interview.

Ainama takunu yúdrik kumulmauto walla'ho kúntúm fi burújim mushayyadah.[1]

Her Highness passed away eight days after I had seen her, at fifteen minutes past 12 o'clock on the 28th day of Safar, in the year 1319 A.H. (June

[1] "Wheresoever ye be, death will overtake you, although ye be in lofty towers" (Sale's translation of the Korán).

16th, 1901 A.D.). In the presence of Captain Lang, the Political Agent, and Maulavi Abdul Jabbar Khán Sáhib, the First Minister of the State, my Mother's private apartments were locked and sealed, and guards were placed at the doors. The melancholy news was conveyed to me by the Minister. From early morning I had been unusually depressed, and the news came to me as the fulfilment of the gloomy forebodings which had taken possession of my mind. Weeping bitterly, I set out for the Táj Mahal. As I drove along, I seemed to be in a trance. I saw the days of my childhood as in a beautiful picture. My Mother was smiling down upon me, and there was no cloud in the sky. Then the picture faded, and another took its place; but it was dark, and there was no sky: and I seemed to see all the trials and sorrows of the succeeding years of my life moving to and fro in it like gloomy spectres. Then it, too, faded, like the circles on a pool of water; and, almost before it had gone, I seemed to be gazing on the World itself; and whilst I looked, a mighty whirlwind, with a sound like the roaring of oceans, swept over it, and the earth and sky were shattered, and out of the darkness which followed came a voice:

Kullo sha'in halikúm illa wajha lahul' hukmo wa' allaihe turja'ún.[1]

In the silent palace, everything seemed to be proclaiming the instability of the world, and the vanity of human ambition. At sunrise, this palace

[1] "Everything shall perish, except Himself: unto Him belongeth judgment: and before Him shall ye be assembled at the last day" (Sale's translation of the Korán).

was the abode of a powerful Chief, whose sway extended over eight thousand square miles of territory. Thousands were ready to obey her slightest command. Her smallest word could make a beggar rich. The reins of justice and mercy were in her hands, and upon her will depended the welfare of near a million human souls. A few short hours, and the sun has crossed the meridian. The palace stands unchanged, and the Ruler—is less than the dust of the ground.

Inna fi zálika la'ibratal le'úlil absar.[1]

I entered the room where my Mother, having laid aside all earthly power, was peacefully sleeping. I stooped and kissed the feet from whose path I had so long been banished, and beneath which the rivers of Paradise were then flowing, and I gazed long and sorrowfully on the face I had so often yearned, with tears, to see, and which I should not look upon again till the Day of Judgment. With an effort, I at last controlled my emotions, and set myself to perform the last services my Mother would ever require from me. I told those who were weeping to dry their tears, and bade them read the *Súrat-i-bakra*[2] and the holy *Kalima*,[3] while, with my own hands, I prepared the body for burial. In accordance with the requirements of the Musalmán faith, the *Súrat-i-bakra* was read through seven times, and the *Kalima* was re-

[1] "Verily, herein is an instruction to men of understanding" (Sale's translation of the Korán).

[2] The *Súrat-i-bakra* is the second *surat*, or chapter, of the Holy Korán.

[3] The *Kalima* is the Muhammadan confession of faith, "Lá illah, illilah, Muhammad ar rasúl allah."

peated one hundred and twenty-five thousand times.

At five minutes past four, the body was carried from the Táj Mahal to the Nishát Afzah garden. The funeral took place with full Islamic rites. It was an impressive ceremony, void of all outward display, and dignified by reason of its simplicity. It was attended by Nawáb Ihtishám-ul-mulk with my two elder sons, the Agent to the Governor-General, the Political Agent, and the chief officers and Sirdars of the State. A funeral prayer was said in the Id-gah, and the burial took place at sunset. All the offices and bazaars were closed, and, for forty days, grain and money were distributed in alms amongst the poor. Telegrams of condolence were received from His Majesty the King, and from the Viceroy, and in a *Gazette Extraordinary*, published by the Government of India, the following obituary notice appeared:

"His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor-General in Council has received with profound regret intelligence of the death, on the 16th of June, of Her Highness the Nawáb Shah Jahán Begam of Bhopál, Knight Grand Commander of the Most Exalted Order of the Star of India, and Member of the Imperial Order of the Crown of India. During the thirty-three years for which Her Highness ruled her State, she followed worthily in the footsteps of her predecessor, Her Highness the Sikandar Begam of Bhopál. She administered her country with marked ability and success. She was distinguished for her liberality and benevolence, and she maintained undimmed the loyal traditions of her house, which has always been conspicuous

for its zeal and fidelity to the interests of the paramount Power. By Her Highness's death her people have lost a just and considerate Ruler, and the British Crown one of its most faithful feudatories."

Her Highness Nawáb Shah Jahán Begam Sáhiba, G.C.S.I., was born at Islámnagar on the 6th of the month Jamádi-ul-awwal, 1254 A.H. (June 20th, 1838 A.D.), and on the 15th of Muharram, 1263 A.H., at the age of 9 years, was installed as ruler of the Bhopál State. On the 11th of Zil Kádah, 1271 A.H., she was married to Bakshi Báki Muhammad Khán, Nasrat Jang, Commander-in-Chief of the Bhopál Army. On the 9th of Shawwal, 1276 A.H., she voluntarily resigned the title and powers of ruler to Nawáb Sikandar Begam, herself becoming the heir-apparent; and, on the former's death in 1285 A.H., she again took her seat on the *masnad* of the State. In 1872, Her Majesty the Queen conferred upon her the title Grand Commander of the Star of India, and in the year 1878, the medal and Order of the Crown of India. In 1892, she received the Order of the Medjidie, of the first class, from His Majesty the Sultan of Turkey. Her first husband having died, she married, in 1288 A.H., Nawáb Sidik Hasan Khán, and again became a widow in 1307 A.H.

Nawáb Shah Jahán Begam was both a scholar and an author, with a wide knowledge of Oriental literature. Her best-known works are '*Tájul Ikbál*,' or *History of Bhopál*, *Diwáni Shirin*,

Kházinátul Loghat, Tahzibun Niswán, and *Loghat Shahjahdni*. Her Court was frequented by men of learning from all parts of India, and she founded many schools for the study of Arabic and Persian. To popularize these schools, many scholarships were given; but, in the majority of cases, the recipients looked upon the money they received as a means of living in idleness rather than of acquiring knowledge, and the schools, in consequence, never achieved the object for which they were opened. Education on modern lines was in an equally backward state, and the only High School that existed was ill-managed and ill-attended. Prejudice against new learning and new methods dies hard: and we have to thank those who kept it alive that, to this day, it is not possible to find, amongst the people of Bhopál, men qualified to hold positions of responsibility in the service of the State. Nawáb Shah Jahán Begam is not to be included among such people. She was an enlightened ruler, and fully alive to the necessity of progressing with the times. But she was served by men of the old school, who looked askance at progress, and were inclined to eye with suspicion any form of education which went beyond teaching lads to learn by rote the oldest and mouldiest books which their old and mouldy teachers could supply.

But if the needs of education were neglected, it may safely be said that, in all other respects, the reign of Nawáb Shah Jahán was a period of continued progress—a progress testifying to the hand of an enlightened and far-seeing ruler. But

my Mother was not only enlightened in a manner rarely to be met with amongst Musálman ladies in India; she was, at the same time, generous, charitable, gentle in disposition, refined in manner, and faithful to her word. No one, from the Viceroys of India down to the lowest of her subjects, has ever denied her the possession of these qualities. During the famine of 1899, hundreds of human beings owed their lives to her liberality; and even strangers, who sought refuge in the State during that terrible time, were fed and cared for. She established a special fund for the relief of the poor, from which hundreds of people, daily, received money sufficient for their subsistence. In her passion for building, she rivalled her namesake the Emperor of Delhi. The Táj Mahal and the Ali Manzil and Benazír palaces bear eloquent testimony to the elegance of her taste. The Táj-ul-masájid, though still incomplete, is a remarkable memorial of her piety. Over sixteen lákhs of rupees have already been spent on its construction. The crystal slabs, designed for the floor, were prepared in England at a cost of seven lákhs of rupees; but as their polished surfaces would have reflected the forms of the worshippers, their use in the mosque was forbidden. When finished, the Táj-ul-masájid will rank amongst the finest buildings in the world. But besides mosques and palaces, Her Highness constructed many public works of permanent benefit to the State. Among these are the Lady Lansdowne Hospital, the Prince of Wales's Hospital, the Shah Jahán Bridge, the Kaisar Embankment, and the Post Office.

The most distant parts of the State were connected with the city of Bhopál by metalled roads, while the sinking of wells, and the making of tanks for the storage of water, conferred a lasting boon on the rural population.

True to the instincts of her race, Nawáb Shah Jahán Begam displayed the greatest interest in military matters, and did much to increase the strength and efficiency of the forces of the State. Besides the establishment of the Imperial Service Lancers, referred to in a previous chapter, she organized the State artillery, and the Body-Guard, built lines for the State cavalry and infantry in Jahángírábád, and raised the pay of both officers and men. In other directions, also, her reforms were numerous. The judicial department was reorganised, and the legal codes revised and amplified. The postal system was reformed and new stamps issued, a printing-press was set up, a steam factory built, and, last but not least, the State was connected with the outside world by a railway of its own, and telegraphic communication.

During Her Highness's reign, three Viceroys visited the State, and on each occasion the loyalty of the ruler and her people was abundantly manifested. The Government of India frequently acknowledged Her Highness's excellent qualities and high administrative ability: and if further proof of her faithfulness to the British Throne is needed it can be found in the letters which, from time to time, she received from Her Majesty Queen Victoria, which show the high place she

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occupied in Her Majesty's affection and esteem. In his *Life of Lord Mayo*, Sir William Hunter, after referring to the services of Nawáb Sikandar Begam during the Mutiny, tells how this famous Begam died, and "left her territory to a daughter worthy of her blood."

"This Princess," he continues, "at the time of her accession in 1868 was a widow of 31 years of age. She inherited her mother's firmness and good sense, with a rare aptitude for the duties of administration. During Lord Mayo's Viceroyalty, she devoted herself to the measures of progress which the Viceroy pressed on every Feudatory Chief who came under his influence. She opened out roads, organized a system of public instruction, executed a survey of her State, reformed the police, suppressed the abominable but deep-rooted trade of kidnapping minors for immoral purposes, and improved the jails. Lord Mayo received her in his capital with marks of distinction, and on the occasion of the visit of the Duke of Edinburgh presented her with honour to His Royal Highness. The Princess carried back to her State the liveliest recollections of his hospitality and kindness,[1] and the next few years of her rule became conspicuous for good government and prudent administrative reforms.

"Her Highness was created a Grand Commander of the Star of India, as the Ruler of a model State."[2]

When we consider my Mother's eminent virtues, and the wisdom and ability she displayed as a ruler, we feel all the more at a loss to compre-

[1] See Appendix E.

[2] *The Earl of Mayo*, p. 112 (*Rulers of India* series).

hend those unfortunate episodes which disfigured her otherwise meritorious reign. The treatment to which I and my family were subjected, the evil acts of Sidik Hasan Khán, and the corrupt administration of Munshi Imtiyáz Ali Khán, sort so ill with her character and capacity that it is difficult to believe that they form part of the history of her life. I think, however, that enough has been said in the previous pages to show that it would be altogether unjust to estimate my Mother's character in the light of these events. From a nature such as hers, endowed as it was with all the nobler qualities of womanhood, it was impossible that injustice and oppression could proceed.

Perhaps the worst fault that can be laid to her charge is that, like the large majority of her sex, she was wilful and obstinate. It was rarely that she could be induced to change her opinion, or to deviate from a course of action she had once determined to follow. This trait is especially noticeable in her relations with Sidik Hasan Khán, and it doubtless contributed, in no small degree, to the prolongation of her displeasure against me. For years after her marriage, her belief in the Nawáb Sáhib was complete and unshakable, and it necessarily followed that she believed every charge brought by him against my husband and myself. That these charges were untrue she had no means of knowing, for no friend of mine was ever allowed access to her, and certain punishment awaited any attempt to speak in our favour. The treatment I met with never lessened my affection for her, for I knew that her anger was directed,

THE EARL OF MAYO

not against me, but against the false image of me that was unceasingly presented before her. I knew, too, that her love for me, though it was withheld, was not destroyed; and I rejoiced, and I still rejoice, to think that, however dark my earthly abode, the light of that love will shine upon me with tenfold brightness in the gardens of Paradise, where there will be none to intercept its rays.

The acts of oppression, and the mischievous writings, of Sidik Hasan Khán, were equally outside my Mother's control. So skilfully were his methods concealed, and his political opinions masked, that for years she was in ignorance of both. That he was engaged in propagating disaffection towards British rule she had no knowledge whatever until the matter was brought to her notice by the Government of India. Her anger that anything in the nature of disloyalty should have had its origin in the State of Bhopál was almost beyond expression, and she did her very utmost to turn her husband from his evil courses. But Sidik Hasan Khán was impervious alike to threats and entreaties. Whenever my Mother's opposition seriously alarmed him, he used the counter-threat of divorce, and against a Muhammadan lady of high rank he could wield no weapon more powerful. The Government of India clearly saw how she was situated, and never, for a single moment, associated her with the evil doings for which her husband was punished; nor did she forfeit, in the smallest degree, the respect in which she had previously been held. After the degrada-

tion of the Nawáb Sáhib, she received expressions of the sincerest sympathy, not only from Colonel Kincaid and Sir Lepel Griffin, but from the Foreign Secretary, the Viceroy, and the Secretary of State for India.

For the corrupt administration of Munshi Imtiyáz Ali Khán, Sidik Hasan Khán alone is to be held responsible. Until the latter's death, it was practically impossible for any report of the Minister's doings to reach Her Highness's ears. With the support of his patron, he grew rich enough and powerful enough to silence the tongue of every one who was opposed to him, and it was not until he attempted to stand alone that my Mother had any conception of the havoc he was creating.

Imperfection is inseparable from human nature, and the history of a faultless ruler never has and never will be written. When we contemplate the lives of good men and women, it is not on their mistakes that we fix our attention, though it is often through their mistakes that their goodness is rendered more plain to us. For sixty-seven years my mother lived a life worthy of all honour and respect. She will be remembered not only as an able and successful ruler, but as an accomplished, loyal, and virtuous lady. When we realize the difficulties of the position she was called upon to fill, remembering at the same time the limitations by which in Eastern society ladies of noble birth are surrounded, we cannot but be amazed that her success was so great and her mistakes so few.

But one occurrence belonging to the period of

my Mother's reign remains to be told. When Nawáb Shah Jahán Begam died, the world was still mourning the loss of the greatest and noblest Queen that ever occupied a throne. A brief reference to this sad event seems to me the fittest manner of bringing this, the first part of my task, to a close.

On the 29th day of Ramazán, 1318 A.H. (January 21st, 1901 A.D.), a telegram was received from His Excellency the Viceroy, containing the following mournful intelligence:

"Her Majesty is sinking fast. All the members of the Royal Family have been summoned to her bedside."

Her Highness received the news with the deepest sorrow, and the Kotwál was ordered to stop all music and beating of drums in the city. The next day was the festival of the *'Id-ul-fit'r*, a time for general rejoicing among Muhammadans; but, on this occasion, gloom and sadness prevailed everywhere. After the *'Id* prayers had been said, all the Muhammadans assembled in the *'Id-gah*, and in the mosques of the city prayed humbly and fervently that their beloved Sovereign might be restored to health. At 10 o'clock in the morning, a second telegram was received, stating that a slight improvement had taken place in Her Majesty's condition. Her Majesty had slept, and had taken nourishment. Hope was rekindled by this news, but scarcely had there been time to make it public when a third telegram arrived, containing these words:

"Her Majesty the Queen is dead."

By the directions of Her Highness, the Minister at once dispatched the following message to the Private Secretary to the Viceroy:

> "Her Highness is greatly shocked at the terrible calamity which has befallen the Empire. Her Highness feels that she has lost a Mother, and is in great grief."

A second message was sent on behalf of the State, and the Political Agent was requested to telegraph Her Highness's sympathy to the Viceroy. A proclamation was made that all the bazars in the city should remain closed for a period of three days, and all public offices in the city and districts for seven days. The flag on the Fatehgarh fort was lowered to half-mast, and the Commandant received orders to fire, on the day of the funeral, eighty-one minute guns, the number corresponding with the years of her late Majesty's life.

The official announcement of the death of the Queen, and of the accession of King Edward, was received from the Political Agent, who also sent instructions that, immediately after the funeral salute, a royal salute of a hundred-and-one guns was to be fired in honour of the latter event, and the flag was again to be hoisted. On February 2nd, the day of the funeral, these instructions were carried out. Telegrams of condolence were sent to the members of the Royal Family, and another to the Government of India, containing Her Highness's congratulations on the accession of King Edward VII.

There are some things which it is better that the pen should not attempt to describe. The great Queen was dead, and the grief that shook India, as the distressing news flew from district to district and from village to village, is not for words. Nor is it for my humble pen to recount the virtues of her whom, not the Empire, but the world, has acknowledged a peerless woman and a peerless Queen. Great writers have told, and will tell again, the story of her life, and its example will be an heritage to mankind for all time.

APPENDIX A

THE troops of the Indore cantonment were the first to revolt in Central India. They murdered several Europeans, and this obliged Colonel Durand, Agent to the Governor-General, Mr. Shakespeare, Mr. Stockley, and Colonel Trevor to go to Sehore, *viá* Ashta, along with their wives and children. But the Bhopál contingent at Sehore contained a large number of *purbiahs*, or natives of eastern Hindustán; and as these men had been induced to join the rebellion, all the officers above-mentioned took refuge in Bhopál. Nawáb Sikandar Begam treated them with great kindness, and sent them (with the exception of Colonel Trevor, who remained with the Sehore troops) in safety to Hoshangábád. About the same time, the doctor of the Gwálior contingent, Captain Carter, commanding the detachment at Augar, Captain Macdougal, second-in-command, Major Macpherson, Captain Le Marchand of the Artillery, Mrs. Burlton, Mrs. Harrison, and Mrs. Hayman, with their children and some servants (27 persons in all), had been forced to quit Indore, and had taken refuge in Orchodo, a small village in the Jáwar *pargana* of the Bhopál State; and they thanked God that they had reached a place of safety, for they knew that Nawáb Sikandar Begam was their friend. There the Tahsildar supplied all their wants, and offered to send a letter for them to the Political Agent at Sehore. A letter was accordingly dispatched to Major Rikardes, the then Political Agent, and he, after consulting Nawáb Sikandar Begam, informed them that they should proceed directly to Hoshangábád, and should on no account come to Sehore. The State provided

them with provisions and clothing, as well as twelve elephants for the journey. These acts of kindness greatly pleased them, but they could not understand why they were not allowed to go to Sehore. They questioned the Muhammadan messenger who brought the letter, and he related to them all that he had heard: telling them how all the Europeans had gone to Hoshangábád by the advice of the Begam, and that the Political Agent was himself preparing to start when his answer was written. He also told them that her Highness the Begam had herself undertaken the responsibility of preserving order at Sehore. They accordingly set out, and reached Ichawar at 11 o'clock at night, and the gate of the Fort was at once opened to them. The next day, they went on to Larkui. Here they were met by a man named Kandan Singh, who told them, with many threats, that he was a spy in the service of the Mahárájas Sindhia and Holkar, and that he had had strict orders not to allow any Feringhi to pass that way alive. "Behind yonder hillock," he said, "are stationed five hundred men under my command. Three days ago the Resident of Indore passed this way, and he had to give me five hundred rupees, besides a large number of swords and guns, before he was allowed to proceed on his way." The European party, on hearing this, were greatly astonished. They possessed neither money nor arms, nor, what they regretted much more, any means of punishing the man for his treachery. It afterwards transpired that Kandan Singh was a brother of Dulip Singh and Narpat Singh, Jágírdárs of Larkui. The object of these men was merely to plunder. But the fear of having their *jágír* confiscated, and of even heavier punishment to follow, caused them to abandon their evil designs, and the party journeyed on unmolested till they reached Budhni, where they crossed the Narbadda and arrived safely in Hoshangábád. Here they met Major Rikardes, Captain Tod, Colonel Holland, and, to their great joy, Captain Harrison also. All thought that the latter had been murdered, and the greatest compassion had been felt for Mrs. Harrison, who was of their party, and who had given birth to a child twelve days before their arrival at Hoshangábád. Soon after these events, the

Indore troops induced the Sehore contingent to break out into open revolt. Nawáb Sikandar Begam at once sent a force to Sehore which took possession of the Government treasury, and kept the mutineers in check until the arrival of British troops. The men of the contingent were then made prisoners, and the ring-leaders hanged. At Bairasía, Bábu Shab Rao Sáhib, Superintendent of Police, was murdered at the instigation of Sarfaraz Khán, a resident of Rahatgarh, and Namdar Khán Pindára. The Bhopál troops captured these men along with Fázil Muhammad Khán, Jágírdár of Ambapáni, in a small village near Rahatgarh. They were handed over to the British General, and were hanged at the Fort gate. Their *jágírs* were confiscated. Nawáb Sikandar Begam, besides doing her utmost to preserve order within the boundaries of her territories, sent provisions to a number of Europeans who had taken refuge at Kálpi, and dispatched her soldiers to Ságar, Chandheri, Jhánsi, and other parts of Bandalkand, to help in the restoration of order. On many occasions these troops displayed great bravery; and on November 29th, 1858, the Agent to the Governor-General expressed, through the Political Agent, his great appreciation of the valuable work they had done. It was acknowledged in all dispatches and reports of the Government that during the Mutiny no ruler had remained a firmer friend to the English than Nawáb Sikandar Begam, and that the State had done signal service to British rule.

APPENDIX B

The marriage agreement was as follows:

I, Ahmad Ali Khán, the son of Báki Muhammad Khán, of Jalálábád, in the district of Muzaffar Nagar, inasmuch as Her Highness Nawáb Shah Jahán Begam, Ruler of Bhopál, has, with the approval of her Nobles, Jágírdárs, Ministers, and the members of her family, consented to my marriage with Nawáb Sultán Jahán Begam, Heir-apparent of the State, do hereby promise that I will abide by the conditions stated in this agreement. I further declare that I have signed this agreement of my own free will in the presence of the undersigned witnesses according to the custom of the State. I declare myself to be morally and legally bound by it, and in the event of my infringing it, or any of its clauses, I shall be answerable for the same to her Highness Nawáb Shah Jahán Begam, the Ministers of the State, and the Political Agent in Bhopál.

(1) I, being a Muhammadan of the Sunni sect, do promise that I will never, for any reason whatever, change my religion. And that if at any time, whether of my own accord, or at the instigation of others, I depart from this promise, my marriage shall be declared null and void.

(2) I agree to pay two crores of rupees as Mihr-i-muajjal, this amount having been fixed in the presence of the Kázi, and other witnesses. I promise to pay this sum either in full, or by instalments, on the demand of either Nawáb Sultán Jahán Begam, or of Nawáb Shah Jahán Begam. In the event of my failing to do so, I shall be liable to the forfeiture of my *jágír*.

(3) I promise always to fulfil, to the best of my ability, all the duties of a husband, and that I will not interfere in any way with my wife's *jágír* or other personal property. I promise to love and cherish my wife, and to do my best to live in harmony with her. In case of my failing in any or all of these things, it shall be in her power to bring about a separation.

(4) I promise that I will not take a second wife without the express permission and approval of Nawáb Sultán Jahán Begam. I shall have nothing to do with the marriages of any children, whether male or female, that Nawáb Sultán Jahán may give birth to; the decision in such matters resting wholly and unconditionally with herself and her mother, the Ruler of the State.

(5) I agree to manage my *jágír* in accordance with the laws of the State. If I violate any of them, my *jágír* shall be liable to confiscation, in which case I shall receive a fixed income from the State in its stead.

(6) I promise to treat the nobles, Jágírdárs, and officers of the State with respect and courtesy. I will endeavour to act upon any advice that they may give me, and to do nothing that may give them offence, or lead to disorders in the State.

(7) I will not retain in my service any person to whom the Ruler of the State or her Ministers may take exception, or who is reputed to be ill-disposed towards the State or the British Government.

(8) I will endeavour always to keep my expenditure within the limits of my income. In the event of my falling into debt, such debt shall be liquidated from my own *jágír*, and not from the coffers of the State.

(9) I promise that I will not permit any of my relatives or personal friends to interfere or take part in the affairs of the State without the permission and approval of both Her Highness Nawáb Shah Jahán Begam and Nawáb Sultán Jahán Begam.

(10) I will, as in duty bound, honour and respect Her Highness the Ruler on all occasions, public or private.

(11) I authorize Her Highness Nawáb Shah Jahán Begam

to decree a separation should there be serious disagreement between my wife and myself. That is to say, if, which God forbid, such disagreement should arise, the word of Her Highness shall be sufficient to part us, and there shall be no need of public proceedings.

Dated 15th Rajab, 1289 A.H.

(*Signed*) Ahmad Ali Khan.

Seal of Ahmad Ali Khán.

20th Rajab, 1289.

Signatures of witnesses :

Bakshi Muhammad Hasan Khan.
Latif Muhammad Khan.
Thakur Parshad, *Accountant.*
Mattu Khan, Nawab Bakshi.
Majid Muhammad Khan.
Munshi Bansi Dhar.
The Political Agent in Bhopal.

APPENDIX C

At the celebration of the Diamond Jubilee in London, the royal escort, by the special desire of Her Majesty the Queen, included a number of officers belonging to the Imperial Service Troops, one officer being chosen from each State. Bhopal was represented by Major Mirza Karim Beg, and the contingent, which was under the command of Major Drummond of the Central India Horse, sailed for England on the *Persia*, and reached London on May 22nd. During their visit to England these officers had the honour of waiting upon His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught, and Lord George Hamilton. In the course of conversation, the latter said, "It was Her Majesty's intention to meet all the Chiefs of India at this time; but, owing to the famine which prevails in India, this could not be accomplished. I assure you all that your presence has given great pleasure to the people of the United Kingdom." On a subsequent occasion, Lord George Hamilton entertained the contingent at luncheon. The Jubilee procession took place on June 24th. Her Majesty was seated in a carriage drawn by eight horses, on either side of which rode officers of the Indian Army. The distance covered was eight miles, and twenty thousand troops lined the route. The officers of the Imperial Service Troops rode immediately in front of the royal carriage, and, together with the Ambassadors, saluted Her Majesty as she entered Buckingham Palace at the close of the procession. It was officially stated that seventy lákhs of people assembled to witness this pageant.

When Her Majesty drove out on July 1st, the officers of the Imperial Service Troops formed her sole escort. They were afterwards received and entertained by Her Majesty at Windsor Castle. Before their departure from England, they attended a levée in London. Each officer, as his name was called, approached Her Majesty and presented his sword to be touched, their homage being graciously acknowledged. On July 7th, Major Karím Beg was decorated by the Queen with a medal, and a few days later, at the Military Tournament, he received a sword from the Prince of Wales as a prize for tent-pegging.

APPENDIX D

The State, for administrative purposes, is divided into three districts, viz. *Nizámat-i-Mashrík*, *Nizámat-i-Magrib*, and *Nizámat-i-Janúb*. Each *Nizámat* comprises nine *tahsíls*.

Each *Nizámat* is in charge of a *Názim* who is the Chief Revenue Officer, District Magistrate, and Civil Judge. He is assisted by *tahsíldárs* in charge of *tahsíls* who are first- and second-class magistrates and *munsifs*. Other officers are the *kánungos*, *patwárís*, and inspector of police.

Each village of any size is a community in itself, having its own artisans, the carpenter, blacksmith, and leather worker, who are paid by a share of the village grain at each harvest. Other members are the village servants, such as the *nai* or barber (a most important individual, who besides his technical duties acts as go-between in arranging marriages), the *dhobi* or washerman, and the *chaukidár* or village watchman. Over the whole community is the *patél* or headman, who is responsible for the proper condition of the village and assists the *mustájir* in collecting the revenue. He is assisted by the *patwárí* or village accountant and register-keeper. (*Bhopál State Gazetteer*, Vol. III.)

APPENDIX E

In the *Táj-ul-Ikbál*, Nawáb Shah Jahán Begam thus describes her visit to Calcutta and her presentation to the Duke of Edinburgh:

"On the 1st of December 1869 A.D. or the 26th Shaban 1286 A.H., Colonel Thompson, the Officiating Political Agent, in accordance with instructions from the Agent to the Governor-General for Central India, wrote to the effect, that I was invited to attend the Durbars of the Governor-General and of the Duke of Edinburgh, and to be present by the 26th of the month. With the greatest pleasure I started from Bhopal on the 17th December or 14th Ramzan 1286 by post stages *via* Hoshungabad, and took rail at Nursingpur for Jabalpur, where I again took rail on the 23rd of December, arriving at Calcutta on the 25th of December. On the 29th December, or 25th Ramzan of the same year, I had the honour to pay my respects to the Prince and to the Governor-General, both of whom treated me with great consideration; and on the 31st of December I took part in the Chapter, held by the Prince, for the Star of India. Afterwards, on different days, these two exalted personages honoured me with return visits at my residence, and visits were courteously interchanged with the Governors of Bombay and Madras and the Bishop of Calcutta and other gentlemen of distinction. The Theatre, Magazine in Fort William, the Citadel of Calcutta, the Museum and Mint, were also visited by us. We also witnessed a review, and on the 14th of January 1870 A.D., or the 11th Shawal 1286 A.H., I paid a visit to the steamer commanded by His Royal Highness, and at all the above places the English Government caused me to be received with the full honours due to me."

APPENDIX F

MR. T. H. THORNTON in his work entitled *General Sir Richard Meade*, referring to the State of Bhopál, writes :

"Bhopál is, next to Hyderábád, the most important Mussalman State in India, with an area not far short of Holkar's, a population of nearly 1,000,000, and a military force of about 2,000 infantry, 8,000 cavalry, and 69 guns. Its ruling family is Afghán, descendants of Dost Muhammad Khán, a distinguished officer of the Moghul Emperor Aurangzeb, and it was represented at the time of Meade's appointment by Shah Jahán Begam, the daughter of Sikandar Begam, G.C.S.I., who, after the death of her worthless husband in 1844, and the usual family dissensions, was appointed Regent by the British Government in 1847.

"Under the advice of a former Agent, Sir Robert Hamilton, she had introduced an excellent system of administration, and both mother and daughter proved themselves staunch friends of the British Government in 1857. In recognition of her services, the mother was appointed a Knight Grand Commander of the Star of India, and Bhopál received an assignment of territory confiscated from the neighbouring State of Dhár, which had rebelled."

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